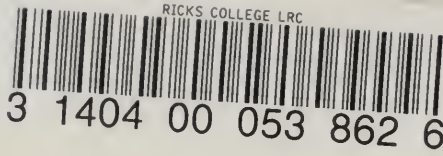




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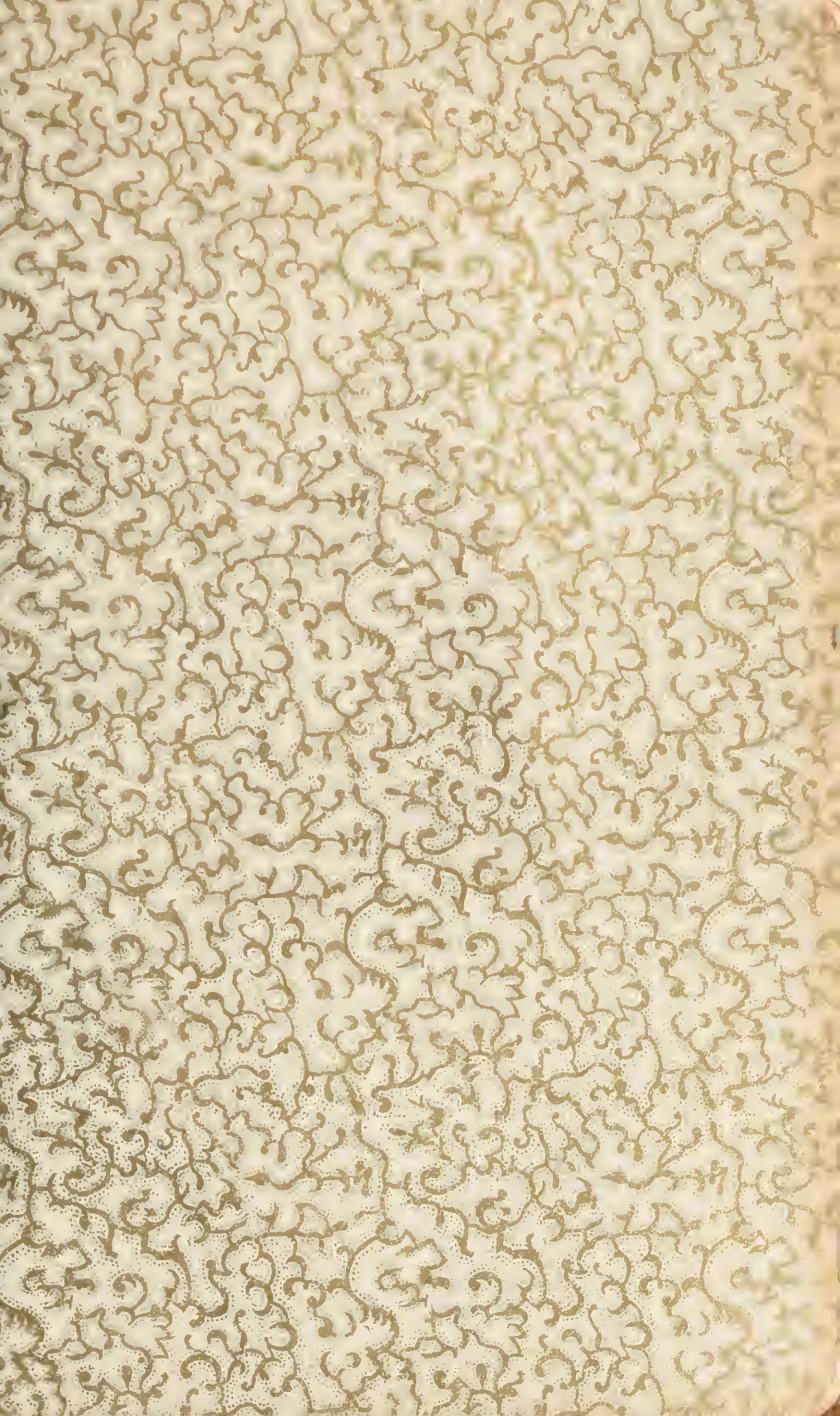


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ONE HOSS SHAY

AND OTHER POEMS

HOLMES

NEW YORK
HURST & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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THE WONDERFUL “ONE-HOSS SHAY” ;

OR, THE DEACON’S MASTERPIECE.

A Logical Story.

HAVE you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I’ll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock’s army was done so brown,

Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay,

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thus the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain, is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—

That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest
trees,
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an ax had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;
“Hahnsum kerridge” they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;
Running as usual; much of the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day,—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local; as one may say.
There couldn't be, for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more.

And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt,
In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.
The parson was working his Sunday's text,
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,

All at once, and nothing first,
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

PRELUDE.

I'M the fellah that tole one day
The tale of the won'erful one-hoss shay.
Wan' to hear another? Say.
—Funny, wasn' it? Made *me* laugh,—
I'm too modest, I am, by half,—
Made me laughs '*s though I sh'd split,*
Cahn' a fellah like fellah's own wit?
—Fellahs keep sayin',—" Well, now that's nice:
Did it once, but cahn' do it twice."
Don' you b'lieve the' 'z no more fat;
Lots in the kitch'n 'z good 'z that.
Fus'-rate throw, 'n' no mistake,
Han' us the props for another shake;
Know I'll try, 'n' guess I'll win;
Here sh' goes for hit 'm ag'in!

PARSON TURELL'S LEGACY;

OR, THE PRESIDENT'S OLD ARM-CHAIR.

A Mathematical Story.

FACTS respecting an old arm-chair.
At Cambridge. Is kept in the College there.
Seems but little the worse for wear.
That's remarkable when I say
It was old in President Holyoke's day.
(One of his boys, perhaps you know,
Died, *at one hundred*, years ago.)
He took lodgings for rain or shine
Under green bed-clothes in '69.

Know old Cambridge? Hope you do.
Born there? Don't say so! I was, too.
(Born in a house with a gambrel-roof,
Standing still, if you must have proof.
"Gambrel?—Gambrel?"—Let me beg
You'll look at a horse's hinder leg,
First great angle above the hoof,
That's the gambrel; hence gambrel-roof.)
Nicest place that ever was seen,

Colleges red and Common green,
Sidewalks brownish with trees between.
Sweetest spot beneath the skies
When the canker-worms don't rise,
When the dust, that sometimes flies
Into your mouth and ears and eyes,
In a quiet slumber lies,
Not in the shape of unbaked pies
Such as barefoot children prize.

A kind of harbor it seems to be,
Facing the flow of a boundless sea.
Rows of gray old Tutors stand
Ranged like rocks above the sand;
Rolling beneath them, soft and green,
Breaks the tide of bright sixteen,
One wave, two waves, three waves, four,
Sliding up the sparkling floor:
Then it ebbs to flow no more,
Wandering off from shore to shore
With its freight of golden ore!
Pleasant place for boys to play;
Better keep your girls away;
Hearts get rolled as pebbles do
Which countless fingering waves pursue,
And every classic beach is strown
With heart-shaped pebbles of blood-red stone.

But this is neither here nor there;
I'm talking about an old arm-chair.
You've heard, no doubt, of PARSON TURELL?
Over at Medford he used to dwell;
Married one of the Mathers' folk;
Got with his wife a chair of oak—
Funny old chair with seat like wedge,
Sharp behind and broad front edge,
One of the oddest of human things,
Turned all over with knobs and rings—
But heavy, and wide, and deep, and grand,
Fit for the worthies of the land,
Chief Justice Sewall a cause to try in,
Or Cotton Mather to sit—and lie—in.
Parson Turell bequeathed the same
To a certain student, SMITH by name;
These were the terms, as we are told:
“Saide Smith saide Chaire to have and holde;
When he doth graduate, then to passe
To y^e oldest Youth in y^e Senior Classe:
On payment of ”—(naming a certain sum)—
By him to whom y^e Chaire shall come;
He to y^e oldest Senior next,
And soe forever,”—(thus runs the text,)—
“But one Crown lesse than he gave to claime,
That being his Debte for use of same.”
Smith transferred it to one of the BROWNS,

And took his money, five silver crowns.
Brown delivered it up to MOORE,
Who paid, it is plain, not five, but four.
Moore made over the chair to LEE,
Who gave him crowns of silver three.
Lee conveyed it unto DREW,
And now the payment, of course, was two.
Drew gave up the chair to DUNN,
All he got, as you see, was one.
Dunn released the chair to HALL,
And got by the bargain no crown at all.
And now it passed to a second BROWN,
Who took it and likewise *claimed a crown*.
When *Brown* conveyed it unto WARE,
Having had one crown, to make it fair,
He paid him two crowns to take the chair ;
And *Ware*, being honest, (as all Wares be,)
He paid one POTTER, who took it, three.
Four got ROBINSON ; five got DIX ;
JOHNSON primus demanded six ;
And so the sum kept gathering still
Till after the battle of Bunker's Hill.

When paper money became so cheap,
Folks wouldn't count it, but said " a heap,"
A certain RICHARDS,—the books declare,—
(A.M. in '90? I've looked with care
Through the Triennial,—*name not there*,)—
This person, Richards, was offered then

Eightscore pounds, but would have ten;
Nine, I think, was the sum he took,—
Not quite certain,—but see the book.
By and by the wars were still,
But nothing had altered the Parson's will.
The old arm-chair was solid yet,
But saddled with such a monstrous debt!
Things grew quite too bad to bear,
Paying such sums to get rid of the chair!
But dead men's fingers hold awful tight,
And there was the will in black and white,
Plain enough for a child to spell.
What should be done no man could tell,
For the chair was a kind of night-mare curse,
And every season but made it worse.

As a last resort, to clear the doubt,
They got old GOVERNOR HANCOCK out.
The Governor came with his Light-horse Troop
And his mounted truckmen, all cock-a-hoop;
Halberds glittered and colors flew,
French horns whinnied and trumpets blew,
The yellow fifes whistled between their teeth,
And the bumble-bee bass-drums boomed beneath;
So he rode with all his band,
Till the President met him, cap in hand.
The Governor "hefted" the crowns, and said,
"A will is a will, and the Parson's dead."

The Governor hefted the crowns. Said he,
"There is your p'int. And here's my fee.
These are the terms you must fulfill,
On such conditions I BREAK THE WILL!"
The Governor mentioned what these should be.
(Just wait a minute and then you'll see.)
The President prayed. Then all was still,
And the Governor rose and BROKE THE WILL!
"About those conditions?" Well, now you go
And do as I tell you, and then you'll know.
Once a year, on Commencement day,
If you'll only take the pains to stay,
You'll see the President in the CHAIR,
Likewise the Governor sitting there.
The President rises; both old and young
May hear his speech in a foreign tongue,
The meaning whereof, as lawyers swear,
Is this: Can I keep this old arm-chair?
And then his Excellency bows,
As much as to say that he allows.
The Vice-Gub. next is called by name;
He bows like t' other, which means the same.
And all the officers round 'em bow,
As much as to say that *they* allow.
And a lot of parchments about the chair
Are handed to witnesses then and there,
And then the lawyers hold it clear
That the chair is safe for another year.

God bless you, Gentlemen! Learn to give
Money to colleges while you live.
Don't be silly and think you'll try
To bother the colleges, when you die,
With codicil this, and codicil that,
That Knowledge may starve while Law grows
fat;
For there never was pitcher than wouldn't spill,
And there's always a flaw in a donkey's will!

OLD IRONSIDES.

AYE, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;

The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

THE LAST LEAF.

I SAW him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
 And he looks at all he meets
 Sad and wan,
 And he shakes his feeble head,
 That it seems as if he said,
 “ They are gone.”

The mossy marbles rest
 On the lips that he has prest
 In their bloom,
 And the names he loved to hear
 Have been carved for many a year
 On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—
 Poor old lady, she is dead
 Long ago—
 That he had a Roman nose,
 And his cheek was like a rose
 In the snow ;

But now his nose is thin,
 And it rests upon his chin
 Like a staff,
 And a crook is in his back,
 And a melancholy crack
 In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

THE CAMBRIDGE CHURCHYARD.

OUR ancient church! its lowly tower,
Beneath the loftier spire,
Is shadowed when the sunset hour
Clothes the tall shaft in fire;
It sinks beyond the distant eye
Long ere the glittering vane,
High wheeling in the western sky,
Has faded o'er the plain.

Like Sentinel and Nun, they keep
Their vigil on the green;

One seems to guard, and one to weep,
The dead that lie between;
And both roll out, so full and near,
Their music's mingling waves,
They shake the grass, whose pennoned
spear
Leans on the narrow graves.

The stranger parts the flaunting weeds,
Whose seeds the winds have strown
So thick, beneath the line he reads,
They shade the sculptured stone;
The child unveils his clustered brow,
And ponders for a while
The graven willow's pendent bough,
Or rudest cherub's smile.

But what to them the dirge, the knell?
These were the mourner's share,
The sullen clang, whose heavy swell
Throbb'd through the beating air;
The rattling cord, the rolling stone,
The shelving sand that slid,
And, far beneath, with hollow tone
Rung on the coffin's lid.

The slumberer's mound grows fresh and
green,
Then slowly disappears;

The mosses creep, the gray stones lean,
Earth hides his date and years;
But, long before the once-loved name
Is sunk or worn away,
No lip the silent dust may claim,
That pressed the breathing clay.

Go where the ancient pathway guides,
See where our sires laid down
Their smiling babes, their cherished brides,
The patriarchs of the town;
Hast thou a tear for buried love?
A sigh for transient power?
All that a century left above,
Go, read it in an hour!

The Indian's shaft, the Briton's ball,
The saber's thirsting edge,
The hot shell, shattering in its fall,
The bayonet's rending wedge,
Here scattered death; yet, seek the spot,
No trace thine eye can see,
No altar,—and they need it not
Who leave their children free!

Look where the turbid rain-drops stand
In many a chiseled square;

The knightly crest, the shield, the brand
Of honored names were there ;
Alas ! for every tear is dried
Those blazoned tablets knew,
Save when the icy marble's side
Drips with the evening dew.

Or gaze upon yon pillared stone,
The empty urn of pride ;
There stand the Goblet and the Sun,
What need of more beside ?
Where lives the memory of the dead,
Who made their tomb a toy ?
Whose ashes press that nameless bed ?
Go, ask the village boy !

Lean o'er the slender western wall,
Ye ever-roaming girls ;
The breath that bids the blossom fall
May lift your floating curls,
To sweep the simple lines that tell
An exile's date and doom ;
And sigh, for where his daughters dwell,
They wreathe the stranger's tomb.

And one amid these shades was born,
Beneath this turf who lies,

Once beaming as the summer's morn,
That closed her gentle eyes;
If sinless angels love as we,
Who stood thy grave beside,
Three seraph welcomes waited thee,
The daughter, sister, bride!

I wandered to thy buried mound
When earth was hid below
The level of the glaring ground,
Choked to its gates with snow,
And when with summer's flowery waves
The lake of verdure rolled,
As if a Sultan's white-robed slaves
Had scattered pearls and gold.

Nay, the soft pinions of the air,
That lift this trembling tone,
Its breath of love may almost bear
To kiss thy funeral stone;
And, now thy smiles have passed away,
For all the joy they gave,
May sweetest dews and warmest ray
Lie on thine early grave!

When damps beneath and storms above
Have bowed these fragile towers,

Still o'er the graves yon locust grove
Shall swing its Orient flowers ;
And I would ask no moldering bust,
If e'er this humble line,
Which breathed a sigh o'er others' dust,
Might call a tear on mine.

TO AN INSECT.

The Katydid is "a species of grasshopper found in the United States, so called from the sound which it makes."—WORCESTER.

I LOVE to hear thine earnest voice,
Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy little dogmatist!
Thou pretty Katydid!
Thou mindest me of gentlefolks,—
Old gentlefolks are they,—
Thou say'st an undisputed thing
In such a solemn way.

Thou art a female, Katydid!
I know it by the trill
That quivers through thy piercing notes,
So petulant and shrill ;
I think there is a knot of you
Beneath the hollow tree,—

A knot of spinster Katydids,—
Do Katydids drink tea?

Oh, tell me where did Katy live,
And what did Katy do?
And was she very fair and young,
And yet so wicked, too?
Did Katy love a naughty man,
Or kiss more cheeks than one?
I warrant Katy did no more
Than many a Kate has done.

Dear me! I'll tell you all about
My fuss with little Jane,
And Ann, with whom I used to walk
So often down the lane,
And all that tore their locks of black,
Or wet their eyes of blue,—
Pray tell me, sweetest Katydid,
What did poor Katy do?

Ah, no! the living oak shall crash,
That stood for ages still,
The rock shall rend its mossy base
And thunder down the hill,
Before the little Katydid
Shall add one word, to tell

The mystic story of the maid
Whose name she knows so well.

Peace to the ever-murmuring race!
And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice,
And lift her drooping lid,
And then the child of future years
Shall hear what Katy did.

THE DILEMMA.

Now, by the blessed Paphian queen,
Who heaves the breast of sweet sixteen;
By every name I cut on bark
Before my morning star grew dark;
By Hymen's torch, by Cupid's dart,
By all that thrills the beating heart;
The bright black eye, the melting blue,—
I cannot choose between the two.
I had a vision in my dreams;
I saw a row of twenty beams;
From every beam a rope was hung,
In every rope a lover swung;

I asked the hue of every eye
That bade each luckless lover die;
Ten shadowy lips said, heavenly blue,
And ten accused the darker hue.

I asked a matron which she deemed
With fairest light of beauty beamed;
She answered, some thought both were fair
Give her blue eyes and golden hair.
I might have liked her judgment well,
But, as she spoke, she rung the bell,
And all her girls, nor small nor few,
Came marching in,—their eyes were blue.

I asked a maiden; back she flung
The locks that round her forehead hung,
And turned her eye, a glorious one,
Bright as a diamond in the sun,
On me, until beneath its rays
I felt as if my hair would blaze;
She liked all eyes but eyes of green;
She looked at me; what could she mean?

Ah! many lids Love lurks between,
Nor heeds the coloring of his screen;
And when his random arrows fly,
The victim falls, but knows not why,

Gaze not upon his shield of jet,
The shaft upon the string is set;
Look not beneath his azure veil,
Though every limb were cased in mail.

Well, both might make a martyr break
The chain that bound him to the stake;
And both, with but a single ray,
Can melt our very hearts away;
And both, when balanced, hardly seem
To stir the scales, or rock the beam;
But that is dearest, all the while,
That wears for us the sweetest smile.

MY AUNT.

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a span.

My aunt! my poor deluded aunt!
Her hair is almost gray;

Why will she train that winter curl
In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
And says she reads as well,
When through a double convex lens
She just makes out to spell?

Her father—grandpapa! forgive
This erring lip its smiles—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
Within a hundred miles;
He sent her to a stylish school;
'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
“Two towels and a spoon.”

They braced my aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;
Oh, never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
My grandsire brought her back;

(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
Might follow on the track;)
“ Ah! ” said my grandsire, as he shook
Some powder in his pan,
“ What could this lovely creature do
Against a desperate man! ”

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
Nor bandit cavalcade,
Tore from the trembling father's arms
His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
On my ancestral tree.

REFLECTIONS OF A PROUD PEDESTRIAN.

I SAW the curl of his waving lash,
And the glance of his knowing eye,
And I knew that he thought he was cutting a
dash,
As his steed went thundering by.

And he may ride in the rattling gig,
Or flourish the Stanhope gay,

And dream that he looks exceeding big
To the people that walk in the way;

But he shall think, when the night is still,
On the stable-boy's gathering numbers,
And the ghost of many a veteran bill
Shall hover around his slumbers;

The ghastly dun shall worry his sleep,
And constables cluster around him,
And he shall creep from the woodhole deep
Where their specter eyes have found him!

Aye! gather your reins, and crack your thong,
And bid your steed go faster;
He does not know, as he scrambles along,
That he has a fool for his master;

And hurry away on your lonely ride,
Nor deign from the mire to save me;
I will paddle it stoutly at your side
With the tandem that nature gave me!

DAILY TRIALS.

BY A SENSITIVE MAN.

OH, there are times
When all this fret and tumult that we hear
Do seem more stale than to the sexton's ear
His own dull chimes.

Ding dong! ding dong!
The world is in a simmer like a sea
Over a pent volcano,—woe is me
All the day long!

From crib to shroud!
Nurse o'er our cradles screameth lullaby,
And friends in boots tramp round us as we die,
Snuffling aloud.

At morning's call
The small-voiced pug-dog welcomes in the sun,
And flea-bit mongrels, wakening one by one,
Give answer all.

When evening dim
Draws round us, then the lonely caterwaul,

Tart solo, sour duet, and general squall,—
These are our hymn.

Women, with tongues
Like polar needles, ever on the jar;
Men, plugless word-spouts, whose deep foun-
tains are
Within their lungs.

Children, with drums
Strapped round them by the fond paternal ass;
Peripatetics with a blade of grass
Between their thumbs.

Vagrants, whose arts
Have caged some devil in their mad machine,
Which grinding, squeaks, with husky groans be-
tween,
Come out by starts.

Cockneys that kill
Thin horses of a Sunday,—men, with clams,
Hoarse as young bisons roaring for their dams
From hill to hill.

Soldiers, with guns,
Making a nuisance of the blessed air,

Child-crying bellman, children in despair,
Screeching for buns.

Storms, thunders, waves!
How, crash, and bellow till ye get your fill;
Ye sometimes rest; men never can be still
But in their graves.

EVENING.

BY A TAILOR.

DAY hath put on his jacket, and around
His burning bosom buttoned it with stars.
Here will I lay me on the velvet grass,
That is like padding to earth's meager ribs,
And hold communion with the things about me.
Ah, me! how lovely is the golden braid
That binds the skirt of night's descending robe!
The thin leaves, quivering on their silken
threads,
Do make a music like to rustling satin
As the light breezes smooth their downy nap.

Ha! what is this that rises to my touch,
So like a cushion? Can it be a cabbage?
It is, it is that deeply injured flower,

Which boys do flout us with;—but yet I love thee,

Thou giant rose, wrapped in a green surtout.
Doubtless in Eden thou didst blush as bright
As these, thy puny brethren; and thy breath
Sweetened the fragrance of her spicy air;
But now thou seemest like a bankrupt beau,
Stripped of his gaudy hues and essences,
And growing portly in his sober garments.

Is that a swan that rides upon the water?
Oh, no, it is that other gentle bird,
Which is the patron of our noble calling.
I well remember, in my early years,
When these young hands first closed upon a
goose;

I have a scar upon my thimble finger,
Which chronicles the hour of young ambition.
My father was a tailor, and his father,
And my sire's grandsire, all of them were tailors;
They had an ancient goose,—it was an heir-loom

From some remoter tailor of our race.
It happened I did see it on a time
When none was near, and I did deal with it,
And it did burn me,—oh, most fearfully!

It is a joy to straighten out one's limbs,
And leap elastic from the level counter,

Leaving the petty grievances of earth,
The breaking thread, the din of clashing shears,
And all the needles that do wound the spirit,
For such a pensive hour of soothing silence.
Kind Nature, shuffling in her loose undress,
Lays bare her shady bosom:—I can feel
With all around me:—I can hail the flowers
That sprig earth's mantle—and yon quiet bird,
That rides the stream, is to me as a brother.
The vulgar know not all the hidden pockets,
Where Nature stows away her loveliness.
But this unnatural posture of the legs
Cramps my extended calves, and I must go
Where I can coil them in their wonted fashion.

THE DORCHESTER GIANT.

THERE was a giant in time of old,
A mighty one was he;
He had a wife, but she was a scold,
So he kept her shut in his mammoth fold;
And he had children three.

It happened to be an election day,
And the giants were choosing a king;
The people were not democrats then,
They did not talk of the rights of men,
And all that sort of thing.

Then the giant took his children three,
And fastened them in the pen;
The children roared; quoth the giant, "Be still!"
And Dorchester Heights and Milton Hill
Rolled back the sound again.

Then he brought them a pudding stuffed with
plums,
As big as the State-House dome;
Quoth he, "There's something for you to eat;
So stop your mouths with your 'lection treat,
And wait till your dad comes home."

So the giant pulled him a chestnut stout,
And whittled the boughs away;
The boys and their mother set up a shout,
Said he, "You're in, and you can't get out,
Bellow as loud as you may."

Off he went and he growled a tune
As he strode the fields along;
'Tis said a buffalo fainted away,
And fell as cold as a lump of clay,
When he heard the giant's song.

But whether the story's true or not,
It isn't for me to show;

There's many a thing that's twice as queer
In somebody's lectures that we hear,
And those are true, you know.

What are those lone ones doing now,
The wife and the children sad?
Oh, they are in a terrible rout,
Screaming, and throwing their pudding about.
Acting as they were mad.

They flung it over to Roxbury hills,
They flung it over the plain,
And all over Milton and Dorchester too
Great lumps of pudding the giants threw;
They tumbled as thick as rain.

Giant and mammoth have passed away,
For ages have floated by;
The suet is hard as a marrow-bone,
And every plum is turned to a stone,
But there the puddings lie.

And if, some pleasant afternoon,
You'll ask me out to ride,
The whole of the story I will tell,
And you shall see where the puddings fell,
And pay for the punch beside.

TO THE PORTRAIT OF "A LADY."

IN THE ATHENÆUM GALLERY.

WELL, Miss, I wonder where you live,
I wonder what's your name,
I wonder how you came to be
In such a stylish frame;
Perhaps you were a favorite child,
Perhaps an only one;
Perhaps your friends were not aware
You had your portrait done!

Yet you must be a harmless soul;
I cannot think that Sin
Would care to throw his loaded dice,
With such a stake to win;
I cannot think you would provoke
The poet's wicked pen,
Or make young women bite their lips,
Or ruin fine young men.

Pray, did you ever hear, my love,
Of boys that go about,
Who, for a very trifling sum,
Will snip one's picture out?

I'm not averse to red and white,
But all things have their place,
I think a profile cut in black
Would suit your style of face!

I love sweet features ; I will own
That I should like myself
To see my portrait on a wall,
Or bust upon a shelf ;
But nature sometimes makes one up
Of such sad odds and ends,
It really might be quite as well
Hushed up among one's friends!

THE COMET.

THE comet! He is on his way,
And singing as he flies ;
The whizzing planets shrink before
The specter of the skies ;
Ah! well may regal orbs burn blue,
And satellites turn pale,
Ten million cubic miles of head,
Ten billion leagues of tail!

On, on by whistling spheres of light
He flashes and he flames ;

He turns not to the left nor right,
He asks them not their names;
One spurn from his demoniac heel,—
Away, away they fly,
Where darkness might be bottled up
And sold for "Tyrian dye."

And what would happen to the land,
And how would look the sea,
If in the bearded devil's path
Our earth should chance to be?
Full hot and high the sea would boil,
Full red the forests gleam;
Methought I saw and heard it all
In a dyspeptic dream!

I saw a tutor take his tube
The Comet's course to spy;
I heard a scream,—the gathered rays
Had stewed the tutor's eye;
I saw a fort,—the soldiers all
Were armed with goggles green;
Pop cracked the guns! whiz flew the balls!
Bang went the magazine!

I saw a poet dip a scroll
Each moment in a tub,

I read upon the warping back,
 “ The Dream of Beelzebub ” ;
He could not see his verses burn,
 Although his brain was fried,
And ever and anon he bent
 To wet them as they dried.

I saw the scalding pitch roll down
 The crackling, sweating pines,
And streams of smoke, like water-spouts,
 Burst through the rumbling mines ;
I asked the firemen why they made
 Such noise about the town ;
They answered not,—but all the while
 The brakes went up and down.

I saw a roasting pullet sit
 Upon a baking egg ;
I saw a cripple scorch his hand
 Extinguishing his leg ;
I saw nine geese upon the wing
 Towards the frozen pole,
And every mother’s gosling fell
 Crisped to a crackling coal.

I saw the ox that browsed the grass
 Writhe in the blistering rays,

The herbage in his shrinking jaws
Was all a fiery blaze ;
I saw huge fishes, boiled to rags,
Bob through the bubbling brine ;
And thoughts of supper crossed my soul ;
I had been rash at mine.

Strange sights ! strange sounds ! O fearful
dream !

Its memory haunts me still,
The steaming sea, the crimson glare,
That wreathed each wooded hill ;
Stranger ! if through thy reeling brain
Such midnight visions sweep,
Spare, spare, oh, spare thine evening meal,
And sweet shall be thy sleep !

THE MUSIC-GRINDERS.

THERE are three ways in which men take
One's money from his purse,
And very hard it is to tell
Which of the three is worse ;
But all of them are bad enough
To make a body curse.

You're riding out some pleasant day,
And counting up your gains ;

A fellow jumps from out a bush,
And takes your horse's reins,
Another hints some words about
A bullet in your brains.

It's hard to meet such pressing friends
In such a lonely spot ;
It's very hard to lose your cash,
But harder to be shot ;
And so you take your wallet out,
Though you would rather not.

Perhaps you're going out to dine,—
Some odious creature begs
You'll hear about the cannon-ball
That carried off his pegs,
And says it is a dreadful thing
For men to lose their legs.

He tells you of his starving wife,
His children to be fed,
Poor little, lovely innocents,
All clamorous for bread,—
And so you kindly help to put
A bachelor to bed.

You're sitting on your window-seat,
Beneath a cloudless moon ;

You hear a sound, that seems to wear
The semblance of a tune,
As if a broken fife should strive
To drown a cracked bassoon.

And nearer, nearer still, the tide
Of music seems to come,
There's something like a human voice,
And something like a drum;
You sit in speechless agony,
Until your ear is numb.

Poor "home, sweet home" should seem to be
A very dismal place;
Your "auld acquaintance" all at once
Is altered in the face;
Their discords sting through Burns and
Moore,
Like hedgehogs dressed in lace.

You think they are crusaders, sent
From some infernal clime,
To pluck the eyes of Sentiment,
And dock the tail of Rhyme,
To crack the voice of Melody,
And break the legs of Time.

But hark! the air again is still,
The music all is ground,

And silence, like a poultice, comes
To heal the blows of sound;
It cannot be,—it is,—it is,—
A hat is going round!

No! Pay the dentist when he leaves
A fracture in your jaw,
And pay the owner of the bear
That stunned you with his paw,
And buy the lobster that has had
Your knuckles in his claw;

But if you are a portly man,
Put on your fiercest frown,
And talk about a constable
To turn them out of town;
Then close your sentence with an oath,
And shut the window down!

And if you are a slender man,
Not big enough for that,
Or, if you cannot make a speech,
Because you are a flat,
Go very quietly and drop
A button in the hat!

THE TREADMILL SONG.

THE stars are rolling in the sky,
The earth rolls on below,
And we can feel the rattling wheel
Revolving as we go.
Then tread away, my gallant boys,
And make the axle fly;
Why should not wheels go round about,
Like planets in the sky?

Wake up, wake up, my duck-legged man,
And stir your solid pegs;
Arouse, arouse, my gawky friend,
And shake your spider legs;
What though you're awkward at the trade,
There's time enough to learn,—
So lean upon the rail, my lad,
And take another turn.

They've built us up a noble wall,
To keep the vulgar out;
We've nothing in the world to do
But just to walk about;
So faster, now, you middle men,
And try to beat the ends,—

It's pleasant work to ramble round
Among one's honest friends.

Here, tread upon the long man's toes,
He shan't be lazy here,—
And punch the little fellow's ribs,
And tweak that lubber's ear,—
He's lost them both,—don't pull his hair,
Because he wears a scratch,
But poke him in the further eye
That isn't in the patch.

Hark! fellows, there's the supper-bell,
And so our work is done;
It's pretty sport,—suppose we take
A round or two for fun!
If ever they should turn me out,
When I have better grown,
Now hang me, but I mean to have
A treadmill of my own!

THE SEPTEMBER GALE.

I'm not a chicken; I have seen
Full many a chill September,
And though I was a youngster then,
That gale I well remember;

The day before, my kite-string snapped,
And I, my kite pursuing,
The wind whisked off my palm-leaf hat;
For me two storms were brewing!

It came as quarrels sometimes do,
When married folks get clashing;
There was a heavy sigh or two,
Before the fire was flashing,—
A little stir among the clouds,
Before they rent asunder,—
A little rocking of the trees,
And then came on the thunder.

Lord! how the ponds and rivers boiled!
They seemed like bursting craters!
And oaks lay scattered on the ground
As if they were p'taters;
And all above was in a howl,
And all below a clatter,
The earth was like a frying-pan,
Or some such hissing matter.

It chanced to be our washing-day,
And all our things were drying;
The storm came roaring through the lines,
And set them all a-flying;

I saw the shirts and petticoats
 Go riding off like witches ;
 I lost, ah ! bitterly I wept,
 I lost my Sunday breeches !

I saw them straddling through the air,
 Alas ! too late to win them ;
 I saw them chase the clouds, as if
 The devil had been in them ;
 They were my darlings and my pride,
 My boyhood's only riches,
 " Farewell, farewell," I faintly cried,
 " My breeches ! O my breeches ! "

That night I saw them in my dreams,
 How changed from what I knew them !
 The dews had steeped their faded threads,
 The winds had whistled through them !
 I saw the wide and ghastly rents
 Where demon claws had torn them ;
 A hole was in their amplest part,
 As if an imp had worn them.

I have had many happy years,
 And tailors kind and clever,
 But those young pantaloons have gone
 Forever and forever !

And not till fate has cut the last
Of all my earthly stitches,
This aching heart shall cease to mourn
My loved, my long-lost breeches!

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS.

I WROTE some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb.

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added, (as a trifling jest,)
"There'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next; the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third; a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The fourth; he broke into a roar;
The fifth; his waistband split;
The sixth; he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

THE LAST READER.

I SOMETIMES sit beneath a tree
And read my own sweet songs;
Though naught they may to others be,
Each humble line prolongs
A tone that might have passed away,
But for that scarce remembered lay.

I keep them like a lock or leaf
That some dear girl has given;
Frail record of an hour, as brief
As sunset clouds in heaven,
But spreading purple twilight still
High over memory's shadowed hill.

They lie upon my pathway bleak,
Those flowers that once ran wild,
As on a father's careworn cheek
The ringlets of his child;
The golden mingling with the gray,
And stealing half its snows away.

What care I though the dust is spread
Around these yellow leaves,
Or o'er them his sarcastic thread
Oblivion's insect weaves?
Though weeds are tangled on the stream,
It still reflects my morning's beam.

And therefore love I such as smile
On these neglected songs
Nor deem that flattery's needless wile
My opening bosom wrongs;
For who would trample, at my side,
A few pale buds, my garden's pride?

It may be that my scanty ore
Long years have washed away,
And where were golden sands before
Is naught but common clay ;
Still something sparkles in the sun
For memory to look back upon.

And when my name no more is heard,
My lyre no more is known,
Still let me, like a winter's bird,
In silence and alone,
Fold over them the weary wing
Once flashing through the dews of spring.

Yes, let my fancy fondly wrap
My youth in its decline,
And riot in the rosy lap
Of thoughts that once were mine,
And give the worm my little store
When the last reader reads no more !

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS.

THIS is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings

In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their
streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft steps its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the
old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by
thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born

Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!

While on mine ear it rings,

Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice
that sings:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,

As the swift seasons roll!

Leave thy low-vaulted past!

Let each new temple, nobler than the last,

Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,

Till thou at length art free,

Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting
sea!

SUN AND SHADOW.

As I look from the isle, o'er its billows of green,

To the billows of foam-crested blue,

Yon bark, that afar in the distance is seen,

Half dreaming, my eyes will pursue:

Now dark in the shadow, she scatters the spray

As the chaff in the stroke of the flail;

Now white as the sea-gull, she flies on her way,

The sun gleaming bright on her sail.

Yet her pilot is thinking of dangers to shun,

Of breakers that whiten and roar;

How little he cares, if in shadow or sun
They see him who gaze from the shore!
He looks to the beacon that looms from the reef,
To the rock that is under his lee,
As he drifts on the blast, like a wind-wafted leaf,
O'er the gulfs of the desolate sea.

Thus drifting afar to the dim-vaulted caves
Where life and its ventures are laid,
The dreamers who gaze while we battle the waves
May see us in sunshine or shade;
Yet true to our course, though the shadows grow
dark,
We'll trim our broad sail as before,
And stand by the rudder that governs the bark,
Nor ask how we look from the shore!

THE PILGRIM'S VISION.

IN the hour of twilight shadows
The Pilgrim sire looked out;
He thought of the "bloody Salvages"
That lurked all round about,
Of Wituwamet's pictured knife
And Pecksuot's whooping shout;
For the baby's limbs were feeble,
Though his father's arms were stout.

His home was a freezing cabin,
Too bare for the hungry rat ;
Its roof was thatched with ragged grass,
And bald enough of that ;
The hole that served for casement
Was glazed with an ancient hat,
And the ice was gently thawing
From the log whereon he sat.

Along the dreary landscape
His eyes went to and fro,
The trees all clad in icicles,
The streams that did not flow ;
A sudden thought flashed o'er him,
A dream of long ago,
He smote his leathern jerkin,
And murmured, " Even so !

" Come hither, God-be-Glorified,
And sit upon my knee ;
Behold the dream unfolding,
Whereof I spake to thee
By the winter's hearth in Leyden
And on the stormy sea.
True is the dream's beginning,
So may its ending be !

" I saw in the naked forest
Our scattered remnant cast,

A screen of shivered branches
Between them and the blast ;
The snow was falling round them,
The dying fell as fast ;
I looked to see them perish,
When lo, the vision passed.

“ Again mine eyes were opened ;
The feeble had waxed strong,
The babes had grown to sturdy men,
The remnant was a throng ;
By shadowed lake and winding stream,
And all the shores along,
The howling demons quaked to hear
The Christian's godly song.

“ They slept, the village fathers,
By river, lake, and shore,
When far adown the steep of Time
The vision rose once more :
I saw along the winter snow
A spectral column pour,
And high above their broken ranks
A tattered flag they bore.

“ Their Leader rode before them,
Of bearing calm and high,
The light of Heaven's own kindling
Thronged in his awful eye ;

These were a Nation's champions
Her dread appeal to try.
God for the right! I faltered,
And lo, the train passed by.

“Once more;—the strife is ended,
The solemn issue tried,
The Lord of Hosts, his mighty arm
Has helped our Israel's side;
Gray stone and grassy hillock
Tell where our martyrs died,
But peaceful smiles the harvest,
And stainless flows the tide.

“A crash, as when some swollen cloud
Cracks o'er the tangled trees!
With side to side, and spar to spar,
Whose smoking decks are these?
I know Saint George's blood-red cross,
Thou Mistress of the Seas,
But what is she whose streaming bars
Roll out before the breeze?

“Ah, well her iron ribs are knit,
Whose thunders strive to quell
The bellowing throats, the blazing lips,
That pealed the Armada's knell!

The mist was cleared—a wreath of stars
Rose o'er the crimsoned swell,
And, wavering from its haughty peak,
The cross of England fell!

“ O trembling Faith! though dark the morn,
A heavenly torch is thine;
While feebler races melt away,
And paler orbs decline,
Still shall the fiery pillar's ray
Along thy pathway shine,
To light the chosen tribe that sought
This Western Palestine!

“ I see the living tide roll on;
It crowns with flaming towers
The icy capes of Labrador,
The Spaniard's 'land of flowers!'
It streams beyond the splintered ridge
That parts the northern showers;
From eastern rock to sunset wave
The Continent is ours!”

He ceased, the grim old soldier-saint,
Then softly bent to cheer
The Pilgrim-child, whose wasting face
Was meekly turned to hear;

And drew his toil-worn sleeve across
To brush the manly tear
From cheeks that never changed in woe,
And never blanched in fear.

The weary Pilgrim slumbers,
His resting-place unknown;
His hands were crossed, his lips were closed,
The dust was o'er him strown;
The drifting soil, the moldering leaf,
Along the sod were blown;
His mound has melted into earth,
His memory lives alone.

So let it live unfading,
The memory of the dead,
Long as the pale anemone
Springs where their tears were shed,
Or, raining in the summer's wind
In flakes of burning red,
The wild rose sprinkles with its leaves
The turf where once they bled!

Yea, when the frowning bulwarks
That guard this holy strand
Have sunk beneath the trampling surge
In beds of sparkling sand,

While in the waste of ocean
One hoary rock shall stand,
Be this its latest legend—
HERE WAS THE PILGRIM'S LAND!

THE STEAMBOAT.

SEE how yon flaming herald treads
The ridged and rolling waves,
As, crashing o'er their crested heads,
She bows her surly slaves!
With foam before and fire behind,
She rends the clinging sea,
That flies before the roaring wind,
Beneath her hissing lee.

The morning spray, like sea-born flowers,
With heaped and glistening bells,
Falls round her fast, in ringing showers,
With every wave that swells;
And, burning o'er the midnight deep,
In lurid fringes thrown,
The living gems of ocean sweep
Along her flashing zone.

With clashing wheel and lifting keel,
And smoking torch on high,

When winds are loud and billows reel,
 She thunders foaming by;
When seas are silent and serene,
 With even beam she glides,
The sunshine glimmering through the green
 That skirts her gleaming sides.

Now, like a wild nymph, far apart
 She veils her shadowy form,
The beating of her restless heart
 Still sounding through the storm;
Now answers, like a courtly dame,
 The reddening surges o'er,
With flying scarf of spangled flame,
 The Pharos of the shore.

To-night yon pilot shall not sleep,
 Who trims his narrowed sail;
To-night yon frigate scarce shall keep
 Her broad breast to the gale;
And many a foresail, scooped and strained,
 Shall break from yard and stay,
Before this smoky wreath has stained
 The rising mist of day.

Hark! hark! I hear yon whistling shroud,
 I see yon quivering mast;
The black throat of the hunted cloud
 Is panting forth the blast!

An hour, and, whirled like winnowing chaff,
The giant surge shall fling
His tresses o'er yon pennon staff,
White as the sea-bird's wing!

Yet rest, ye wanderers of the deep;
Nor wind nor wave shall tire
Those fleshless arms, whose pulses leap
With floods of living fire;
Sleep on, and, when the morning light
Streams o'er the shining bay,
Oh think of those for whom the night
Shall never wake in day!

LEXINGTON.

SLOWLY the mist o'er the meadow was creeping,
Bright on the dewy buds glistened the sun,
When from his couch, while his children were
sleeping,
Rose the bold rebel and shouldered his gun.
Waving her golden veil
Over the silent dale,
Blithe looked the morning on cottage and spire;
Hushed was his parting sigh,
While from his noble eye
Flashed the last sparkle of liberty's fire.

On the smooth green where the fresh leaf is
springing

Calmly the first-born of glory have met ;
Hark ! the death-volley around them is ringing !
Look ! with their life-blood the young grass is
wet !

Faint is the feeble breath,
Murmuring low in death,
“ Tell to our sons how their fathers have died ” ;
Nerveless the iron hand,
Raised for its native land,
Lies by the weapon that gleams at its side.

Over the hillsides the wild knell is tolling,
From their far hamlets the yeomanry come ;
As through the storm-clouds the thunder-burst
rolling,
Circles the beat of the mustering drum.
Fast on the soldier's path
Darken the waves of wrath,
Long have they gathered and loud shall they fall ;
Red glares the musket's flash,
Sharp rings the rifle's crash,
Blazing and clanging from thicket and wall.

Gayly the plume of the horseman was dancing,
Never to shadow his cold brow again ;

Proudly at morning the war-steed was prancing,
Reeking and panting he droops on the rein;
Pale is the lip of scorn,
Voiceless the trumpet horn,
Torn is the silken-fringed red cross on high;
Many a belted breast
Low on the turf shall rest
Ere the dark hunters the herd have passed by.
Snow-girdled crags where the hoarse wind is
raving,
Rocks where the weary floods murmur and
wail,
Wilds where the fern by the furrow is waving,
Reeled with the echoes that rode on the gale;
Far as the tempest thrills
Over the darkened hills,
Far as the sunshine streams over the plain,
Roused by the tyrant band,
Woke all the mighty land,
Girded for battle, from mountain to main.
Green be the graves where her martyrs are lying!
Shroudless and tombless they sunk to their rest
While o'er their ashes the starry fold flying
Wraps the proud eagle they roused from his
nest.
Borne on her Northern pine,
Long o'er the foaming brine

Spread her broad banner to storm and to sun,
Heaven keep her ever free,
Wide as o'er land and sea,
Floats the fair emblem her heroes have won;

ON LENDING A PUNCH-BOWL.

THIS ancient silver bowl of mine, it tells of good
old times,
Of joyous days and jolly nights, and merry
Christmas chimes;
They were a free and jovial race, but honest,
brave, and true,
Who dipped their ladle in the punch when this
old bowl was new.

A Spanish galleon brought the bar,—so runs the
ancient tale;
'Twas hammered by an Antwerp smith, whose
arm was like a flail;
And now and then between the strokes, for fear
his strength should fail,
He wiped his brow and quaffed a cup of good old
Flemish ale.

'Twas purchased by an English squire to please
his lovely dame,
Who saw the cherubs, and conceived a longing
for the same;

And oft as on the ancient stock another twig was
found,

'Twas filled with caudle spiced and hot, and
handed smoking round.

But, changing hands, it reached at length a
Puritan divine,

Who used to follow Timothy, and take a little
wine,

But hated punch and prelacy; and so it was,
perhaps,

He went to Leyden, where he found conventicles
and schnapps.

And then, of course, you know what's next: it
left the Dutchman's shore

With those that in the *Mayflower* came,—a hun-
dred souls and more,—

Along with all the furniture, to fill their new
abodes,—

To judge by what is still on hand, at least a
hundred loads.

'Twas on a dreary winter's eve, the night was
closing dim,

When brave Miles Standish took the bowl, and
filled it to the brim;

The little Captain stood and stirred the posset
with his sword,
And all his sturdy men-at-arms were ranged
about the board.

He poured the fiery Hollands in,—the man that
never feared,
He took a long and solemn draught, and wiped
his yellow beard;
And one by one the musketeers—the men that
fought and prayed—
All drank as 'twere their mother's milk, and not
a man afraid.

That night, affrighted from his nest, the scream-
ing eagle flew,
He heard the Pequot's ringing whoop, the
soldier's wild halloo;
And there the sachem learned the rule he taught
to kith and kin:
“Run from the white man when you find he
smells of Hollands gin!”

A hundred years, and fifty more, had spread their
leaves and snows,
A thousand rubs had flattened down each little
cherub's nose,

When once again the bowl was filled, but not in
mirth or joy,—
'Twas mingled by a mother's hand to cheer her
• parting boy.

Drink, John, she said, 'twill do you good,—poor
' child, you'll never bear
This working in the dismal trench, out in the
midnight air ;
And if—God bless me!—you were hurt, 'twould
keep away the chill.
So John *did* drink—and well he wrought that
night at Bunker's Hill!

I tell you, there was generous warmth in good
old English cheer ;
I tell you, 'twas a pleasant thought to bring its
symbol here.
'Tis but the fool that loves excess ; hast thou a
drunken soul ?
Thy bane is in thy shallow skull, not in my silver
bowl !

I love the memory of the past,—its pressed yet
fragrant flowers,—
The moss that clothes its broken walls, the ivy
on its towers ;

Nay, this poor bauble it bequeathed,—my eyes
grow moist and dim,
To think of all the vanished joys that danced
around its brim.

Then fill a fair and honest cup, and bear it
straight to me;
The goblet hallows all it holds, whate'er the
liquid be;
And may the cherubs on its face protect me from
the sin
That dooms one to those dreadful words,—“ My
dear, where *have* you been? ”

A SONG.

FOR THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF HAR-
VARD COLLEGE, 1836.

WHEN the Puritans came over
Our hills and swamps to clear,
The woods were full of catamounts,
And Indians red as deer,
With tomahawks and scalping-knives,
That make folks' heads look queer;
Oh, the ship from England used to bring
A hundred wigs a year!

The crows came cawing through the air
To pluck the Pilgrims' corn,
The bears came snuffing round the door
Whene'er a babe was born,
The rattlesnakes were bigger round
Than the butt of the old ram's horn
The deacon blew at meeting time
On every "Sabbath" morn.

But soon they knocked the wigwains down,
And pine-tree trunk and limb
Began to sprout among the leaves
In shape of steeples slim;
And out the little wharves were stretched
Along the ocean's rim,
And up the little schoolhouse shot
To keep the boys in trim.

And when at length the College rose,
The sachem cocked his eye
At every tutor's meager ribs
Whose coat-tails whistled by:
But when the Greek and Hebrew words
Came tumbling from his jaws,
The copper-colored children all
Ran screaming to the squaws.

And who was on the Catalogue
When college was begun?

Two nephews of the president,
And *the* Professor's son;
(They turned a little Indian by,
As brown as any bun;)
Lord! how the seniors knocked about
The freshman class of one!

They had not then the dainty things
That commons now afford,
But succotash and hominy
Were smoking on the board;
They did not rattle round in gigs,
Or dash in long-tailed blues,
But always on Commencement days
The tutors blacked their shoes.

God bless the ancient Puritans!
Their lot was hard enough;
But honest hearts make iron arms
And tender maids are tough;
So love and faith have formed and fed
Our true-born Yankee stuff,
And keep the kernel in the shell
The British found so rough!

THE ISLAND HUNTING-SONG.

No more the summer floweret charms,
The leaves will soon be sere,
And autumn folds his jeweled arms
Around the dying year;
So, ere the waning seasons claim
Our leafless groves awhile,
With golden wine and glowing flame
We'll crown our lonely isle.

Once more the merry voices sound
Within the antlered hall,
And long and loud the baying hounds
Return the hunter's call;
And through the woods, and o'er the hill,
And far along the bay,
The driver's horn is sounding shrill,
Up, sportsmen, and away!

No bars of steel or walls of stone
Our little empire bound,
But, circling with his azure zone,
The sea runs foaming round;
The whitening wave, the purple skies,
The blue and lifted shore,

Braid with their dim and blending dyes
Our wide horizon o'er.

And who will leave the grave debate
That shakes the smoky town,
To rule amid our island-state,
And wear our oak-leaf crown?
And who will be awhile content
To hunt our woodland game,
And leave the vulgar pack that scent
The reeking track of fame?

Ah, who that shares in toils like these
Will sigh not to prolong
Our days beneath the broad-leaved trees,
Our nights of mirth and song?
Then leave the dust of noisy streets,
Ye outlaws of the wood,
And follow through his green retreats
Your noble Robin Hood.

DEPARTED DAYS.

YES, dear departed, cherished days,
Could Memory's hand restore
Your morning light, your evening rays,
From Time's gray urn once more,

Then might this restless heart be still,
This straining eye might close,
And hope her fainting pinions fold,
While the fair phantoms rose.

But, like a child in ocean's arms,
We strive against the stream,
Each moment farther from the shore
Where life's young fountains gleam;
Each moment fainter wave the fields,
And wider rolls the sea;
The mist grows dark—the sun goes down,
Day breaks—and where are we?

THE ONLY DAUGHTER.

ILLUSTRATION OF A PICTURE.

THEY bid me strike the idle strings,
As if my summer days
Had shaken sunbeams from their wings
To warm my autumn lays;
They bring to me their painted urn,
As if it were not time
To lift my gauntlet and to spurn
The lists of boyish rhyme;

And were it not that I have still
Some weakness in my heart
That clings around my stronger will
And pleads for gentler art,
Perchance I had not turned away
The thoughts grown tame with toil,
To cheat this lone and pallid ray,
That wastes the midnight oil.

Alas! with every year I feel
Some roses leave my brow;
Too young for wisdom's tardy seal,
Too old for garlands now.
Yet, while the dewy breath of spring
Steals o'er the tingling air,
And spreads and fans each emerald wing
The forest soon shall wear,
How bright the opening year would seem,
Had I one look like thine
To meet me when the morning beam
Unseals these lids of mine!
Too long I bear this lonely lot,
That bids my heart run wild
To press the lips that love me not,
To clasp the stranger's child.

How oft beyond the dashing seas,
Amidst those royal bowers,

Where danced the lilacs in the breeze,
And swung the chestnut-flowers,
I wandered like a wearied slave
Whose morning task is done,
To watch the little hands that gave
Their whiteness to the sun;
To revel in the bright young eyes,
Whose luster sparkled through
The sable fringe of Southern skies
Or gleamed in Saxon blue!
How oft I heard another's name
Called in some truant's tone;
Sweet accents! which I longed to claim,
To learn and lisp my own!

Too soon the gentle hands, that pressed
The ringlets of the child,
Are folded on the faithful breast
Where first he breathed and smiled;
Too oft the clinging arms untwine,
The melting lips forget,
And darkness veils the bridal shrine
Where wreaths and torches met;
If Heaven but leaves a single thread
Of Hope's dissolving chain,
Even when her parting plumes are spread,
It bids them fold again;

The cradle rocks beside the tomb ;
The cheek now changed and chill
Smiles on us in the morning bloom
Of one that loves us still.

Sweet image ! I have done thee wrong
To claim this destined lay ;
The leaf that asked an idle song
Must bear my tears away.
Yet in thy memory shouldst thou keep
This else forgotten strain,
Till years have taught thine eyes to weep,
And flattery's voice is vain ;
Oh, then, thou fledgling of the nest,
Like the long-wandering dove,
Thy weary heart may faint for rest,
As mine, on changeless love ;
And while these sculptured lines retrace
The hours now dancing by,
This vision of thy girlish grace
May cost thee, too, a sigh.

SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE DINNER GIVEN TO CHARLES
DICKENS BY THE YOUNG MEN OF BOSTON,
FEBRUARY 1, 1842.

THE stars their early vigils keep,
The silent hours are near,
When drooping eyes forget to weep,—
Yet still we linger here;
And what—the passing churl may ask—
Can claim such wondrous power,
That Toil forgets his wonted task,
And Love his promised hour?

The Irish harp no longer thrills,
Or breathes a fainter tone;
The clarion blast from Scotland's hills,
Alas! no more is blown;
And Passion's burning lip bewails
Her Harold's wasted fire,
Still lingering o'er the dust that veils
The Lord of England's lyre.

But grieve not o'er its broken strings,
Nor think its soul hath died,

While yet the lark at heaven's gate sings,
As once o'er Avon's side ;
While gentle summer sheds her bloom,
And dewy blossoms wave,
Alike o'er Juliet's storied tomb
And Nelly's nameless grave.

Thou glorious island of the sea!
— Though wide the wasting flood
That parts our distant land from thee,
We claim thy generous blood ;
Nor o'er thy far horizon springs
One hallowed star of fame,
But kindles, like an angel's wings,
Our western skies in flame !

LINES

RECITED AT THE BERKSHIRE JUBILEE, PITTS-
FIELD, MASS., AUGUST 23, 1844.

COME back to your mother, ye children, for
shame,
Who have wandered like truants for riches or
fame !
With a smile on her face, and a sprig in her cap,
She calls you to feast from her bountiful lap.

Come out from your alleys, your courts, and
your lanes,
And breathe, like young eagles, the air of our
plains ;
Take a whiff from our fields, and your excellent
wives
Will declare it's all nonsense insuring your lives.

Come you of the law, who can talk, if you please,
Till the man in the moon will allow it's a cheese,
And leave "the old lady, that never tells lies,"
To sleep with her handkerchief over her eyes.

Ye healers of men, for a moment decline
Your feats in the rhubarb and ipecac line ;
While you shut up your turnpike, your neighbors
can go
The old roundabout road to the regions below.

You clerk, on whose ears are a couple of pens,
And whose head is an ant-hill of units and tens,
Though Plato denies you, we welcome you still
As a featherless biped, in spite of your quill.

Poor drudge of the city ! how happy he feels,
With the burrs on his legs and the grass at his
heels !

No *dodger* behind, his bandannas to share,
No constable grumbling, "You mustn't walk
there!"

In yonder green meadow, to memory dear,
He slaps a mosquito and brushes a tear;
The dew-drops hang round him on blossoms
and shoots,
He breathes but one sigh for his youth and his
boots.

There stands the old schoolhouse, hard by the
old church;
That tree at its side had the flavor of birch;
Oh, sweet were the days of his juvenile tricks,
Though the prairie of youth had so many "big
licks."

By the side of yon river he weeps and he slumps,
The boots fill with water, as if they were pumps,
Till, sated with rapture, he steals to his bed,
With a glow in his heart and a cold in his head.

'Tis past,—he is dreaming,—I see him again;
The ledger returns as by legerdemain;
His neckcloth is damp with an easterly flaw,
And he holds in his fingers an omnibus straw.

He dreams the chill gust is a blossomy gale,
That the straw is a rose from his dear native
vale;

And murmurs, unconscious of space and of time,
“A 1. Extra super. Ah, isn't it PRIME!”

Oh, what are the prizes we perish to win
To the first little “shiner” we caught with a pin!
No soil upon earth is so dear to our eyes
As the soil we first stirred in terrestrial pies!

Then come from all parties and parts to our
feast;

Though not at the “Astor,” we'll give you at
least

A bite at an apple, a seat on the grass,
And the best of old—water—at nothing a glass.

NUX POSTCŒNATICA.

I WAS sitting with my microscope, upon my
parlor rug,

With a very heavy quarto and a very lively bug:
The true bug had been organized with only two
antennæ,

But the humbug in the copperplate would have
them twice as many.

And I thought, like Dr. Faustus, of the emptiness of art,

How we take a fragment for the whole, and call the whole a part,

When I heard a heavy footstep that was loud enough for two,

And a man of forty entered, exclaiming, "How d'ye do?"

He was not a ghost, my visitor, but solid flesh and bone;

He wore a Palo Alto hat, his weight was twenty stone;

(It's odd how hats expand their brims as ripper years invade,

As if when life had reached its noon it wanted them for shade!)

I lost my focus,—dropped my book,—the bug, who was a flea,

At once exploded, and commenced experiments on me.

They have a certain heartiness that frequently appalls,—

Those mediæval gentlemen in semilunar smalls!

"My boy," he said, (colloquial ways,—the vast, broad-hatted man,)

"Come dine with us on Thursday next,—you must, you know you can;

We're going to have a roaring time, with lots of
fun and noise,
Distinguished guests, et cetera, the JUDGE, and
all the boys."

Not so,—I said,—my temporal bones are show-
ing pretty clear.
It's time to stop,—just look and see that hair
above this ear;
My golden days are more than spent,—and,
what is very strange,
If these are real silver hairs, I'm getting lots of
change.

Besides—my prospects—don't you know that
people won't employ
A man that wrongs his manliness by laughing
like a boy?
And suspect the azure blossom that unfolds
upon a shoot,
As if wisdom's old potato could not flourish at
its root?

It's a very fine reflection, when you're etching
out a smile
On a copperplate of faces that would stretch at
least a mile,

That, what with sneers from enemies and cheap-
ening shrugs of friends,
It will cost you all the earnings that a month of
labor lends!

It's a vastly pleasing prospect, when you're
screwing out a laugh,
That your very next year's income is diminished
by a half,
And a little boy trips barefoot that Pegasus may
go,
And the baby's milk is watered that your Heli-
con may flow!

No;—the joke has been a good one,—but I'm
getting fond of quiet,
And I don't like deviations from my customary
diet;
So I think I will not go with you to hear the
toasts and speeches,
But stick to old Montgomery Place, and have
some pig and peaches.

The fat man answered: Shut your mouth, and
hear the genuine creed;
The true essentials of a feast are only fun and
feed;

The force that wheels the planets round delights
in spinning tops,
And that young earthquake t'other day was
great at shaking props.

I tell you what, philosopher, if all the longest
heads
That ever knocked their sinciputs in stretching
on their beds
Were round one great mahogany, I'd beat those
fine old folks
With twenty dishes, twenty fools, and twenty
clever jokes!

Why, if Columbus should be there, the company
would beg
He'd show that little trick of his of balancing
the egg!
Milton to Stilton would give in, and Solomon to
Salmon,
And Roger Bacon be a bore, and Francis Bacon
gammon!

And as for all the "patronage" of all the clowns
and boors
That squint their little narrow eyes at any freak
of yours,

Do leave them to your prosier friends,—such
fellows ought to die

When rhubarb is so very scarce and ipecac so
high!

And so I come,—like Lochinvar, to tread a
single measure,—

To purchase with a loaf of bread a sugar-plum
of pleasure,

To enter for the cup of glass that's run for after
dinner,

Which yields a single sparkling draught, then
breaks and cuts the winner.

Ah, that's the way delusion comes,—a glass of
old Madeira,

A pair of visual diaphragms revolved by Jane
or Sarah,

And down go vows and promises without the
slightest question

If eating words won't compromise the organs of
digestion!

And yet, among my native shades, beside my
nursing mother,

Where every stranger seems a friend, and every
friend a brother,

I feel the old convivial glow (unaided) o'er me
stealing,—

The warm, champagne, old-particular, brandy-
punchy feeling.

We're all alike;—Vesuvius flings the scoriæ from
his fountain,

But down they come in volleying rain back to
the burning mountain;

We leave, like those volcanic stones, our pre-
cious Alma Mater,

But will keep dropping in again to see the dear
old crater.

VERSES FOR AFTER-DINNER

PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY, 1844.

I WAS thinking last night, as I sat in the cars,
With the charmingest prospects of cinders and
stars,

Next Thursday is—bless me!—how hard it will
be,

If that cannibal president calls upon me!

There is nothing on earth that he will not de-
vour,

From a tutor in seed to a freshman in flower;

No sage is too gray, and no youth is too green,
And you can't be too plump, though you're
never too lean.

While others enlarge on the boiled and the roast,
He serves a raw clergyman up with a toast,
Or catches some doctor, quite tender and young,
And basely insists on a bit of his tongue.

Poor victim, prepared for his classical spit,
With a stuffing of praise and a basting of wit,
You may twitch at your collar and wrinkle your
brow,
But you're up on your legs, and you're in for it
now.

Oh, think of your friends,—they are waiting to
hear
These jokes that are thought so remarkably
queer ;
And all the Jack Horners of metrical buns
Are prying and fingering to pick out the puns.

Those thoughts which, like chickens, will always
thrive best
When reared by the heat of the natural nest,
Will perish if hatched from their embryo dream
In the mist and the glow of convivial steam.

Oh pardon me, then, if I meekly retire,
 With a very small flash of ethereal fire;
 No rubbing will kindle your Lucifer match,
 If the *fiz* does not follow the primitive scratch.

Dear friends, who are listening so sweetly the
 while,
 With your lips double-reefed in a smug little
 smile,
 I leave you two fables, both drawn from the
 deep,—
 The shells you can drop, but the pearls you may
 keep.

.

The fish called the FLOUNDER, perhaps you may
 know,
 Has one side for use and another for show;
 One side for the public, a delicate brown,
 And one that is white, which he always keeps
 down.

A very young flounder, the flattest of flats,
 (And they're none of them thicker than opera
 hats,)
 Was speaking more freely than charity taught
 Of a friend and relation that just had been
 caught.

“ My! what an exposure! just see what a sight!
I blush for my race,—he is showing his white!
Such spinning and wriggling,—why, what does
he wish?
How painfully small to respectable fish! ”

Then said an old SCULPIN,—“ My freedom excuse,
You’re playing the cobbler with holes in your
shoes;
Your brown side is up,—but just wait till you’re
tried
And you’ll find that all flounders are white on
one side.”

.

There’s a slice near the PICKEREL’S pectoral
fins,
Where the *thorax* leaves off and the *venter* be-
gins,
Which his brother, survivor of fish-hooks and
lines,
Though fond of his family, never declines.

He loves his relations; he feels they’ll be missed;
But that one little tidbit he cannot resist;

So your bait may be swallowed, no matter how
fast,
For you catch your next fish with a piece of the
last.

And thus, O survivor, whose merciless fate
Is to take the next hook with the president's
bait,
You are lost while you snatch from the end of
his line
The morsel he rent from this bosom of mine!

A MODEST REQUEST

COMPLIED WITH AFTER THE DINNER AT PRESI-
DENT EVERETT'S INAUGURATION.

SCENE,— a back parlor in a certain square,
Or court, or lane,—in short, no matter where;
Time,—early morning, dear to simple souls
Who love its sunshine and its fresh-baked rolls;
Persons,—take pity on this tell-tale blush,
That, like the Æthiop, whispers, “Hush, oh
hush!”

Delightful scene! where smiling comfort broods,
Nor business frets, nor anxious care intrudes;

O *si sic omnia!* were it ever so!
But what is stable in this world below?
Medio e fonte,—Virtue has her faults,—
The clearest fountains taste of Epsom salts;
We snatch the cup and lift to drain it dry,—
Its central dimple holds a drowning fly!
Strong is the pine by Maine's ambrosial streams,
But stronger augers pierce its thickest beams;
No iron gate, no spiked and paneled door,
Can keep out death, the postman, or the bore.
Oh, for a world where peace and silence reign,
And blunted dullness terebrates in vain!
—The door-bell jingles,—enter Richard Fox,
And takes this letter from his leathern box.

“ Dear Sir,—

In writing on a former day,
One little matter I forgot to say;
I now inform you in a single line,
On Thursday next our purpose is to *dine*.
The act of feeding, as you understand,
Is but a fraction of the work in hand;
Its nobler half is that ethereal meat
The papers call ‘ the intellectual treat ’;
Songs, speeches, toasts, around the festive board
Drowned in the juice the College pumps afford;
For only water flanks our knives and forks,
So, sink or float, we swim without the corks.

Yours is the art, by native genius taught,
To clothe in eloquence the naked thought;
Yours is the skill its music to prolong
Through the sweet effluence of mellifluous
song;

Yours the quaint trick to cram the pithy line
That cracks so crisply over bubbling wine;
And since success your various gifts attends,
We—that is, I and all your numerous friends—
Expect from you—your single self a host—
A speech, a song (excuse me, *and* a toast;
Nay, not to haggle on so small a claim,
A few of each, or several of the same.

(Signed), Yours, *most truly*,——”

No! my sight must fail,—
If that aint Judas on the largest scale!
Well, this *is* modest;—nothing else than that?
My coat? my boots? my pantaloons? my hat?
My stick? my gloves? as well as all my wits,
Learning and linen,—everything that fits!

Jack, said my lady, is it grog you'll try,
Or punch, or toddy, if perhaps you're dry?
Ah, said the sailor, though I can't refuse,
You know, my lady, 'taint for me to choose;
I'll take the grog to finish off my lunch,
And drink the toddy while you mix the punch.

THE SPEECH. (The speaker, rising to be seen,
Looks very red, because so very green.)
I rise—I rise—with unaffected fear,
(Louder!—speak louder!—who the deuce can
hear?)

I rise—I said—with undisguised dismay—
—Such are my feelings as I rise, I say!
Quite unprepared to face this learned throng,
Already gorged with eloquence and song;

Around my view are ranged on either hand
The genius, wisdom, virtue of the land;
“Hands that the rod of empire might have
swayed”

Close at my elbow stir their lemonade;
Would you like Homer learn to write and speak,
That bench is groaning with its weight of Greek;
Behold the naturalist who in his teens
Found six new species in a dish of greens;
And lo, the master in a statelier walk,
Whose annual ciphering takes a ton of ‘chalk;
And there the linguist, who by common roots
Thro’ all their nurseries tracks old Noah’s
shoots,—

How Shem’s proud children reared the Assyrian
piles,
While Ham’s were scattered through the Sand-
wich Isles!

—Fired at the thought of all the present shows,
My kindling fancy down the future flows :
I see the glory of the coming days
O'er Time's horizon shoot its streaming rays ;
Near and more near the radiant morning draws
In living luster (rapturous applause) ;
From east to west the blazing heralds run,
Loosed from the chariot of the ascending sun,
Through the long vista of uncounted years
In cloudless splendor (three tremendous cheers).
My eye prophetic, as the depths unfold,
Sees a new advent of the age of gold ;
While o'er the scene new generations press,
New heroes rise the coming time to bless,—
Not such as Homer's, who, we read in Pope,
Dined without forks and never heard of soap,—
Not such as May to Marlborough Chapel
brings,
Lean, hungry, savage, anti-everythings,
Copies of Luther in the pasteboard style,—
Put genuine articles, the true Carlyle ;
While far on high the blazing orb shall shed
Its central light on Harvard's holy head,
And learning's ensigns ever float unfurled
Here in the focus of the newborn world !
The speaker stops, and, trampling down the
pause,
Roars through the hall the thunder of applause,

One stormy gust of long suspended Ahs!
One whirlwind chaos of insane Hurrahs!

THE SONG. But this demands a briefer line,—
A shorter muse, and not the old long Nine;
Long meter answers for a common song,
Though common meter does not answer long.

She came beneath the forest dome
To seek its peaceful shade,
An exile from her ancient home,
A poor, forsaken maid;
No banner, flaunting high above,
No blazoned cross, she bore;
One holy book of light and love
Was all her worldly store.

The dark brown shadows passed away,
And wider spread the green,
And where the savage used to stray
The rising mart was seen;
So, when the laden winds had brought
Their showers of golden rain,
Her lap some precious gleanings caught,
Like Ruth's amid the grain.

But wrath soon gathered uncontrolled
Among the baser churls,
To see her ankles red with gold,
Her forehead white with pearls.
"Who gave to thee the glittering bands
That lace thine azure veins?
Who bade thee lift those snow-white hands
We bound in gilded chains?"

"These are the gems my children gave,"
The stately dame replied;
"The wise, the gentle, and the brave,
I nurtured at my side.
If envy still your bosom stings,
Take back their rims of gold;
My sons will melt their wedding-rings,
And give a hundred-fold!"

THE TOAST. Oh, tell me, ye who thoughtless
ask

Exhausted nature for a threefold task,
In wit or pathos if one share remains,
A safe investment for an ounce of brains!
Hard is the job to launch the desperate pun,
A pun-job dangerous as the Indian one.
Turned by the current of some stronger wit
Back from the object that you mean to hit,

Like the strange missile which the Australian
throws,

Your verbal *boomerang* slaps you on the nose.

One vague inflection spoils the whole with
doubt,

One trivial letter ruins all, left out ;

A knot can choke a felon into clay,

A not will save him, spelt without the *k* :

The smallest word has some unguarded spot,

And danger lurks in *i* without a dot.

Thus great Achilles, who had shown his zeal

In healing wounds, died of a wounded heel ;

Unhappy chief, who, when in childhood doused,

Had saved his bacon had his feet been soused !

Accursed heel that killed a hero stout !

Oh, had your mother known that you were out,

Death had not entered at the trifling part

That still defies the small surgeon's art

With corns and bunions,—not the glorious

John,

Who wrote the book we all have pondered on.

But other bunions, bound in fleecy hose,

To “ Pilgrim's Progress ” unrelenting foes !



A HEALTH, unmingled with the reveler's wine,

To him whose title is indeed divine ;

Truth's sleepless watchmen on her midnight
tower,

Whose lamp burns brightest when the tempests
lower.

Oh, who can tell with what a leaden flight
Drag the long watches of his weary night,
While at his feet the hoarse and blinding gale
Strews the torn wreck and bursts the fragile sail,
When stars have faded, when the wave is dark,
When rocks and sands embrace the foundering
bark!

But still he pleads with unavailing cry,
Behold the light, O wanderer, look or die!
A health, fair Themis! Would the enchanted
vine

Wreathed its green tendrils round this cup of
thine!

If learning's radiance fill thy modern court,
Its glorious sunshine streams through Black-
stone's port!

Lawyers are thirsty, and their clients too,—
Witness at least, if memory serve me true.
Those old tribunals, famed for dusty suits,
Where men sought justice ere they brushed their
boots;

And what can match, to solve a learned doubt,
The warmth within that comes from "cold with-
out"?

Health to the art whose glory is to give
The crowning boon that makes it life to live.
Ask not her home;—the rock where nature
flings

Her arctic lichen, last of living things;
The gardens, fragrant with the orient's balm,
From the low jasmine to the starlike palm,
Hail her as mistress o'er the distant waves,
And yield their tribute to her wandering slaves,
Wherever, moistening the ungrateful soil,
The tear of suffering tracks the path of toil,
There, in the anguish of his fevered hours,
Her gracious finger points to healing flowers;
Where the lost felon steals away to die,
Her soft hand waves before his closing eye;
Where hunted misery finds his darkest lair,
The midnight taper shows her kneeling there!
VIRTUE,—the guide that men and nations own;
And Law,—the bulwark that protects her
throne;
And HEALTH,—to all its happiest charm that
lends;
These and their servants, man's untiring friends:
Pour the bright lymph that Heaven itself lets
fall,
In one fair bumper let us toast them all!

THE PARTING WORD.

I MUST leave thee, lady sweet !
Months shall waste before we meet ;
Winds are fair and sails are spread,
Anchors leave their ocean bed ;
Ere this shining day grow dark,
Skies shall gird my shoreless bark.
Through thy tears, O lady mine,
Read thy lover's parting line.

When the first sad sun shall set,
Thou shalt tear thy locks of jet ;
When the morning star shall rise,
Thou shalt wake with weeping eyes ;
When the second sun goes down,
Thou more tranquil shalt be grown,
Taught too well that wild despair
Dims thine eyes and spoils thy hair.

All the first unquiet week
Thou shalt wear a smileless cheek ;
In the first month's second half
Thou shalt once attempt to laugh ;
Then in Pickwick thou shalt dip,
Slightly puckering round the lip,

Till at last, in sorrow's spite,
Samuel makes thee laugh outright.

While the first seven mornings last,
Round thy chamber bolted fast
Many a youth shall fume and pout,
"Hang the girl, she's always out!"
While the second week goes round,
Vainly shall they ring and pound;
When the third week shall begin,
"Martha, let the creature in."

Now once more the flattering throng
Round thee flock with smile and song,
But thy lips, unweaned as yet,
Lisp, "Oh, how can I forget!"
Men and devils both contrive
Traps for catching girls alive;
Eve was duped, and Helen kissed,—
How, oh how, can you resist?

First be careful of your fan,
Trust it not to youth or man;
Love has filled a pirate's sail
Often with its perfumed gale.
Mind your kerchief most of all,
Fingers touch when kerchiefs fall;

Shorter ell than mercers clip
Is the space from hand to lip.

Trust not such as talk in tropes,
Full of pistols, daggers, ropes ;
All the hemp that Russia bears
Scarce would answer lovers' prayers ;
Never thread was spun so fine,
Never spider stretched the line,
Would not hold the lovers true
That would really swing for you.

Fiercely some shall storm and swear,
Beating breasts in black despair ;
Others murmur with a sigh,
You must melt, or they will die :
Painted words on empty lies,
Grubs with wings like butterflies ;
Let them die, and welcome, too ;
Pray what better could they do ?

Fare thee well : if years efface
From thy heart love's burning trace,
Keep, oh keep that hallowed seat
From the tread of vulgar feet ;
If the blue lips of the sea
Wait with icy kiss for me,
Let not thine forget the vow,
Sealed how often, Love, as now.

A SONG OF OTHER DAYS.

As o'er the glacier's frozen sheet
Breathes soft the Alpine rose,
So through life's desert springing sweet
The flower of friendship grows;
And as where'er the roses grow
Some rain or dew descends,
'Tis nature's law that wine should flow
To wet the lips of friends.
Then once again, before we part,
My empty glass shall ring;
And he that has the warmest heart
Shall loudest laugh and sing.

They say we were not born to eat;
But gray-haired sages think
It means, Be moderate in your meat,
And partly live to drink.
For baser tribes the rivers flow
That know not wine or song;
Man wants but little drink below,
But wants that little strong.
Then once again, etc.

If one bright drop is like the gem
That decks a monarch's crown,

One goblet holds a diadem
Of rubies melted down!
A fig for Cæsar's blazing brow,
But, like the Egyptian queen,
Bid each dissolving jewel glow
My thirsty lips between.
Then once again, etc.

The Grecian's mound, the Roman's urn,
Are silent when we call,
Yet still the purple grapes return
To cluster on the wall;
It was a bright Immortal's head
They circled with the vine,
And o'er their best and bravest dead
They poured the dark-red wine.
Then once again, etc.

Methinks o'er every sparkling glass
Young Eros waves his wings,
And echoes o'er its dimples pass
From dead Anacreon's strings;
And, tossing round its beaded brim
Their locks of floating gold,
With bacchant dance and choral hymn
Return the nymphs of old.
Then once again, etc.

A welcome then to joy and mirth,
From hearts as fresh as ours,
To scatter o'er the dust of earth
Their sweetly mingled flowers;
'Tis Wisdom's self the cup that fills
In spite of Folly's frown,
And Nature, from her vine-clad hills,
That rains her life-blood down!
Then once again, before we part,
My empty glass shall ring;
And he that has the warmest heart
Shall loudest laugh and sing.

SONG

FOR A TEMPERANCE DINNER TO WHICH LADIES
WERE INVITED (NEW YORK MERCANTILE
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, NOVEMBER, 1842).

A HEALTH to dear woman! She bids us un-
twine,
From the cup it encircles, the fast-clinging
vine;
But her cheek in its crystal with pleasure will
glow,
And mirror its bloom in the bright wave below.

A health to sweet woman! The days are no
more
When she watched for her lord till the revel was
o'er,
And smoothed the white pillow, and blushed
when he came,
As she pressed her cold lips on his forehead of
flame.

Alas for the loved one! too spotless and fair
The joys of his banquet to chasten and share;
Her eye lost its light that his goblet might shine,
And the rose of her cheek was dissolved in his
wine.

Joy smiles in the fountain, health flows in the
rills,
As their ribbons of silver unwind from the hills;
They breathe not the mist of the bacchanal's
dream,
But the lilies of innocence float on their stream.

Then a health and a welcome to woman once
more!
She brings us a passport that laughs at our door;
It is written on crimson,—its letters are pearls,—
It is countersigned *Nature*.—So, room for the
Girls!

A SENTIMENT.

THE pledge of Friendship! it is still divine,
Though watery floods have quenched its burn-
ing wine;

Whatever vase the sacred drops may hold,
The gourd, the shell, the cup of beaten gold,
Around its brim the hand of Nature throws
A garland sweeter than the banquet's rose.
Bright are the blushes of the vine-wreathed
bowl,

Warm with the sunshine of Anacreon's soul,
But dearer memories gild the tasteless wave
That fainting Sidney perished as he gave.
'Tis the heart's current lends the cup its glow,
Whate'er the fountain whence the draught may
flow,—

The diamond dew-drops sparkling through the
sand,

Scooped by the Arab in his sunburnt hand,
Or the dark streamlet oozing from the snow,
Where creep and crouch the shuddering Esqui-
maux;

Aye, in the stream that, ere again we meet,
Shall burst the pavement, glistening at our feet,
And, stealing silent from its leafy hills,
Thread all our alleys with its thousand rills,—

In each pale draught if generous feeling blend,
And o'er the goblet friend shall smile on friend,
Even cold Cochituate every heart shall warm,
And genial Nature still defy reform!

THE TWO ARMIES.

As Life's unending column pours,
Two marshaled hosts are seen,—
Two armies on the trampled shores
That Death flows black between.

One marches to the drum-beat's roll,
The wide-mouthed clarion's bray,
And bears upon a crimson scroll,
“Our glory is to slay.”

One moves in silence by the stream,
With sad, yet watchful eyes.
Calm as the patient planet's gleam
That walks the clouded skies.

Along its front no sabers shine,
No blood-red pennons wave;
Its banner bears the single line,
“Our duty is to save.”

For those no death-bed's lingering shade ;
At Honor's trumpet-call,
With knitted brow and lifted blade
In Glory's arms they fall.

For these no clashing falchions bright,
No stirring battle-cry ;
The bloodless stabber calls by night,—
Each answers, " Here am I ! "

For those the sculptor's laureled bust,
The builder's marble piles,
The anthems pealing o'er their dust
Through long cathedral aisles.

For these the blossom-sprinkled turf
That floods the lonely graves
When Spring rolls in her sea-green surf
In flowery-foaming waves.

Two paths lead upward from below,
And angels wait above,
Who count each burning life-drop's flow,
Each falling tear of Love.

Though from the Hero's bleeding breast
Her pulses Freedom drew,
Though the white lilies in her crest
Sprang from that scarlet dew,—

While Valor's haughty champions wait
Till all their scars are shown,
Love walks unchallenged through the gate,
To sit beside the Throne!

THE STETHOSCOPE SONG.

A PROFESSIONAL BALLAD.

THERE was a young man in Boston town,
He bought him a stethoscope nice and new,
All mounted and finished and polished down,
With an ivory cap and a stopper too.

It happened a spider within did crawl,
And spun him a web of ample size,
Wherein there chanced one day to fall
A couple of very imprudent flies.

The first was a bottle-fly, big and blue,
The second was smaller, and thin and long;
So there was a concert between the two,
Like an octave flute and a tavern gong.

Now being from Paris but recently,
This fine young man would show his skill;
And so they gave him, his hand to try,
A hospital patient extremely ill.

Some said that his *liver* was short of *bile*,
And some that his *heart* was over size,
While some kept arguing, all the while,
He was crammed with *tubercles* up to his eyes.

This fine young man then up stepped he,
And all the doctors made a pause;
Said he, The man must die, you see,
By the fifty-seventh of Louis's laws.

But since the case is a desperate one,
To explore his chest it may be well;
For if he should die and it were not done,
You know the *autopsy* would not tell.

Then out his stethoscope he took,
And on it placed his curious ear;
Mon Dieu! said he, with a knowing look,
Why, here is a sound that's mighty queer!

The *bourdonnement* is very clear,—
Amphoric buzzing, as I'm alive!
Five doctors took their turn to hear;
Amphoric buzzing, said all the five.

There's *empyema* beyond a doubt;
We'll plunge a *trocar* in his side.

The diagnosis was made out,—

They tapped the patient; so he died.

Now such as hate new-fashioned toys

Began to look extremely glum;

They said that *rattles* were made for boys,

And vowed that his *buzzing* was all a hum.

There was an old lady had long been sick,

And what was the matter none did know:

Her pulse was slow, though her tongue was
quick;

To her this knowing youth must go.

So there the nice old lady sat,

With phials and boxes all in a row;

She asked the young doctor what he was at,

To thump her and tumble her ruffles so.

Now, when the stethoscope came out,

The flies began to buzz and whiz:

Oh, ho! the matter is clear, no doubt;

An *aneurism* there plainly is.

The *bruit de râpe* and the *bruit de scie*

And the *bruit de diable* are all combined;

How happy Bouillaud would be,

If he a case like this could find!

Now, when the neighboring doctors found
A case so rare had been descried,
They every day her ribs did pound
In squads of twenty ; so she died.

Then six young damsels, slight and frail,
Received this kind young doctor's cares ;
They all were getting slim and pale,
And short of breath on mounting stairs.

They all made rhymes with " sighs " and " skies,"
And loathed their puddings and buttered
rolls,

And dieted, much to their friends' surprise,
On pickles and pencils and chalk and coals.

So fast their little hearts did bound,
The frightened insects buzzed the more ;
So over all their chests he found
The *rôle sifflant* and the *rôle sonore*.

He shook his head. There's grave disease,—
I greatly fear you all must die ;
A slight *post-mortem*, if you please,
Surviving friends would gratify.

The six young damsels wept aloud,
Which so prevailed on six young men

That each his honest love avowed,
Whereat they all got well again.

This poor young man was all aghast;
The price of stethoscopes came down;
And so he was reduced at last
To practice in a country town.

The doctors being very sore,
A stethoscope they did devise
That had a rammer to clear the bore,
With a knob at the end to kill the flies.

Now use your ears, all you that can,
But don't forget to mind your eyes,
Or you may be cheated, like this young man,
By a couple of silly, abnormal flies.

A SENTIMENT.

A TRIPLE health to Friendship, Science, Art,
From heads and hands that own a common heart!
Each in its turn the others' willing slave,
Each in its season strong to heal and save.

Friendship's blind service, in the hour of need,
Wipes the pale face, and lets the victim bleed.

Science must stop to reason and explain;
ART clasps his finger on the streaming vein.

But Art's brief memory fails the hand at last;
Then SCIENCE lifts the flambeau of the past.
When both their equal impotence deplore,
When Learning sighs, and Skill can do no more.
The tear of FRIENDSHIP pours its heavenly balm,
And soothes the pang no anodyne may calm!

THE PLOWMAN.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BERKSHIRE AGRICUL-
TURAL SOCIETY, OCTOBER 4, 1849.

CLEAR the brown path, to meet his coulter's
gleam!
Lo! on he comes, behind his smoking team,
With toil's bright dew-drops on the sunburnt
brow,
The lord of earth, the hero of the plow!

First in the field before the reddening sun,
Last in the shadows when the day is done,
Line after line, along the bursting sod,
Marks the broad acres where his feet have trod;

Still, where he treads, the stubborn clods divide,
The smooth, fresh furrow opens deep and wide ;
Matted and dense the tangled turf upheaves,
Mellow and dark the ridgy cornfield cleaves ;

Up the steep hillside, where the laboring train
Slants the long track that scores the level plain ;
Through the moist valley, clogged with oozing
clay,

The patient convoy breaks its destined way ;
At every turn the loosening chains resound,
The swinging plowshare circles glistening round,
Till the wide field one billowy waste appears,
And wearied hands unbind the panting steers.

These are the hands whose sturdy labor brings
The peasant's food, the golden pomp of kings ;
This is the page, whose letters shall be seen
Changed by the sun to words of living green ;
This is the scholar, whose immortal pen
Spells the first lesson hunger taught to men ;
These are the lines which heaven-commanded
Toil

Shows on his deed,—the charter of the soil !

O gracious Mother, whose benignant breast
Wakes us to life, and lulls us all to rest,

How thy sweet features, kind to every clime,
Mock with their smile the wrinkled front of
time!

We stain thy flowers,—they blossom o'er the
dead;

We rend thy bosom, and it gives us bread;
O'er the red field that trampling strife has torn,
Waves the green plumage of thy tasseled corn;
Our maddening conflicts scar thy fairest plain,
Still thy soft answer is the growing grain.
Yet, O our Mother, while uncounted charms
Steal round our hearts in thine embracing arms,
Let not our virtues in thy love decay,
And thy fond sweetness waste our strength away.

No! by these hills, whose banners now displayed,
In blazing cohorts Autumn has arrayed;
By yon twin summits, on whose splintery crests
The tossing hemlocks hold the eagles' nests;
By these fair plains the mountain circle screens,
And feeds with streamlets from its dark ravines,
True to their home, these faithful arms shall
toil

To crown with peace their own untainted soil;
And, true to God, to freedom, to mankind,
If her chained bandogs Faction shall unbind,
These stately forms, that bending even now
Bowed their strong manhood to the humble
plow,

Shall rise erect, the guardians of the land,
The same stern iron in the same right hand,
Till o'er their hills the shouts of triumph run,
The sword has rescued what the plowshare won!

A POEM.

DEDICATION OF THE PITTSFIELD CEMETERY,
SEPTEMBER 9, 1850.

ANGEL of Death! extend thy silent reign!
Stretch thy dark scepter o'er this new domain!
No sable car along the winding road
Has borne to earth its unresisting load;
No sudden mound has risen yet to show
Where the pale slumberer folds his arms below;
No marble gleams to bid his memory live
In the brief lines that hurrying Time can give;
Yet, O Destroyer! from thy shrouded throne
Look on our gift; this realm is all thine own!

Fair is the scene; its sweetness oft beguiled
From their dim paths the children of the wild;
The dark-haired maiden loved its grassy dells,
The feathered warrior claimed its wooded swells,
Still on its slopes the plowman's ridges show
The pointed flints that left his fatal bow,

Chipped with rough art and slow barbarian toil,
Last of his wrecks that strews the alien soil!

Here spread the fields that heaped their ripened
store

Till the brown arms of Labor held no more;
The scythe's broad meadow with its dusky blush;
The sickle's harvest with its velvet flush;
The green-haired maize, her silken tresses laid,
In soft luxuriance, on her harsh brocade;
The gourd that swells beneath her tossing plume;
The coarser wheat that rolls in lakes of bloom,
Its coral stems and milk-white flowers alive
With the wide murmurs of the scattered hive;
Here glowed the apple with the penciled streak
Of morning painted on its southern cheek;
The pear's long necklace strung with golden
drops,

Arched, like the banyan, o'er its pillared props;
Here crept the growths that paid the laborer's
care

With the cheap luxuries wealth consents to spare;
Here sprang the healing herbs which could not
save

The hand that reared them from the neighboring
grave.

Yet all its varied charms, forever free
From task and tribute, Labor yields to thee:

No more, when April sheds her fitful rain,
The sower's hand shall cast its flying grain;
No more, when Autumn strews the flaming
leaves,
The reaper's band shall gird its yellow sheaves;
For thee alike the circling seasons flow
Till the first blossoms heave the latest snow.
In the stiff clod below the whirling drifts,
In the loose soil the springing herbage lifts,
In the hot dust beneath the parching weeds,
Life's withering flower shall drop its shriveled
seeds;
Its germ entranced in thy unbreathing sleep
Till what thou sowest mightier angels reap!

Spirit of Beauty! let thy graces blend
With loveliest Nature all that Art can lend.
Come from the bowers where Summer's life-
blood flows
Through the red lips of June's half-open rose,
Dressed in bright hues, the loving sunshine's
dower;
For tranquil Nature owns no mourning flower.
Come from the forest where the beech's screen
Bars the fierce noonbeam with its flakes of green;
Stay the rude ax that bares the shadowy plains,
Stanch the deep wound that dries the maple's
veins.

Come with the stream whose silver-braided
rills

Fling their unclasping bracelets from the hills,
Till in one gleam, beneath the forest's wings,
Melts the white glitter of a hundred springs.

Come from the steeps where look majestic
forth

From their twin thrones the Giants of the North
On the huge shapes, that, crouching at their
knees,

Stretch their broad shoulders, rough with shaggy
trees.

Through the wide waste of ether, not in vain,
Their softened gaze shall reach our distant plain;
There, while the mourner turns his aching eyes
On the blue mounds that print the bluer skies,
Nature shall whisper that the fading view
Of mightiest grief may wear a heavenly hue.

Cherub of Wisdom! let thy marble page
Leave its sad lesson, new to every age;
Teach us to live, not grudging every breath
To the chill winds that waft us on to death,
But ruling calmly every pulse it warms,
And tempering gently every word it forms.
Seraph of Love! in heaven's adoring zone,
Nearest of all around the central throne,

While with soft hands the pillowed turf we
spread

That soon shall hold us in its dreamless bed,

With the low whisper—Who shall first be laid
In the dark chamber's yet unbroken shade?

Let thy sweet radiance shine rekindled here,
And all we cherish grow more truly dear.

Here in the gates of Death's o'erhanging vault,

Oh, teach us kindness for our brother's fault:

Lay all our wrongs beneath this peaceful sod,

And lead our hearts to Mercy and its God.

FATHER of all! in Death's relentless claim

We read thy mercy by its sterner name;

In the bright flower that decks the solemn bier,

We see thy glory in its narrowed sphere;

In the deep lessons that affliction draws,

We trace the curves of thy encircling laws;

In the long sigh that sets our spirits free,

We own the love that calls us back to Thee!

Through the hushed street, along the silent
plain

The spectral future leads its mourning train,

Dark with the shadows of uncounted bands,

Where man's white lips and woman's wringing
hands

Track the still burden, rolling slow before,
That love and kindness can protect no more ;
The smiling babe that, called to mortal strife,
Shuts its meek eyes and drops its little life ;
The drooping child who prays in vain to live,
And pleads for help its parents cannot give ;
The pride of beauty stricken in its flower ;
The strength of manhood broken in an hour ;
Age in its weakness, bowed by toil and care,
Traced in sad lines beneath its silvered hair.

The sun shall set, and heaven's resplendent
spheres
Gild the smooth turf unhallowed yet by tears,
But ah ! how soon the evening stars will shed
Their sleepless light around the slumbering
dead !

Take them, O Father, in immortal trust !
Ashes to ashes, dust to kindred dust,
Till the last angel rolls the stone away,
And a new morning brings eternal day !

TO AN ENGLISH FRIEND.

THE seed that wasteful autumn cast
To waver on its stormy blast,

Long o'er the wintry desert tost,
Its living germ has never lost.
Dropped by the weary tempest's wing,
It feels the kindling ray of spring,
And, starting from its dream of death,
Pours on the air its perfumed breath.

So, parted by the rolling flood,
The love that springs from common blood
Needs but a single sunlit hour
Of mingling smiles to bud and flower ;
Unharm'd its slumbering life has flown,
From shore to shore, from zone to zone,
Where summer's falling roses stain
The tepid waves of Pontchartrain,
Or where the lichen creeps below
Katahdin's wreaths of whirling snow.

Though fiery sun and stiffening cold
May change the fair ancestral mold,
No winter chills, no summer drains
The life-blood drawn from English veins,
Still bearing wheresoe'er it flows
The love that with its fountain rose,
Unchanged by space, unwronged by time,
From age to age, from clime to clime !

THE VOICELESS.

WE count the broken lyres that rest
Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,
But o'er their silent sister's breast
The wild-flowers who will stoop to number?
A few can touch the magic string,
And noisy Fame is proud to win them;
Alas for those that never sing,
But die with all their music in them!

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
Whose song has told their hearts' sad story,
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break and give no sign
Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his longed-for wine
Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing
presses.

If singing breath or echoing chord
To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA.

A NIGHTMARE DREAM BY DAYLIGHT.

Do you know the Old Man of the Sea, of the
Sea?

Have you met with that dreadful old man?
If you haven't been caught, you will be, you will
be;

For catch you he must and he can.

He doesn't hold on by your throat, by your
throat,

As of old in the terrible tale;

But he grapples you tight by the coat, by the
coat,

Till its buttons and button-holes fail.

There's the charm of a snake in his eye, in his
eye,

And a polypus-grip in his hands;

You cannot go back, nor get by, nor get by,
If you look at the spot where he stands.

Oh, you're grabbed! See his claw on your sleeve,
on your sleeve!

It is Sindbad's Old Man of the Sea!
You're a Christian, no doubt you believe, you
believe:

You're a martyr, whatever you be!

Is the breakfast-hour past? They must wait,
they must wait,

While the coffee boils sullenly down,
While the Johnny-cake burns on the grate, on
the grate,

And the toast is done frightfully brown.

Yes, your dinner will keep; let it cool, let it cool,
And Madam may worry and fret,
And children half-starved go to school, go to
school;

He can't think of sparing you yet.

Hark; the bell for the train! "Come along!
Come along!

For there isn't a second to lose."

"ALL ABOARD!" (He holds on.) "Fsht! ding-
dong! Fsht! ding-dong!"

You can follow on foot, if you choose.

There's a maid with a cheek like a peach, like a
peach,

That is waiting for you in the church ;
But he clings to your side like a leech, like a
leech,

And you leave your lost bride in the lurch.

There's a babe in a fit—hurry quick ! hurry quick !

To the doctor's as fast as you can !

The baby is off, while you stick, while you stick,
In the grip of the dreadful Old Man !

I have looked on the face of the Bore, of the
Bore ;

The voice of the Simple I know ;

I have welcomed the Flat at my door, at my
door ;

I have sat by the side of the Slow ;

I have walked like a lamb by the friend, by the
friend,

That stuck to my skirts like a burr ;

I have borne the stale talk without end, without
end,

Of the sitter whom nothing could stir :

But my hamstrings grow loose, and I shake, and
I shake,

At the sight of the dreadful Old Man ;

Yea, I quiver and quake, and I take, and I take,
To my legs with what vigor I can!

Oh the dreadful Old Man of the Sea, of the
Sea!

He's come back like the Wandering Jew!
He has had his cold claw upon me, upon me,
And be sure that he'll have it on you!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

1852.

WHERE, oh where are the visions of morning,
Fresh as the dews of our prime?
Gone, like tenants that quit without warning,
Down the back entry of time.

Where, oh where are life's lilies and roses,
Nursed in the golden dawn's smile?
Dead as the bulrushes round little Moses,
On the old banks of the Nile.

Where are the Marys, and Anns, and Elizas,
Loving and lovely of yore?
Look in the columns of old *Advertisers*,—
Married and dead by the score.

Where the gray colts and the ten-year-old fillies
 Saturday's triumph and joy?
 Gone, like our friend *πόδας ὠκὺς* Achilles,
 Homer's ferocious old boy.

Die-away dreams of ecstatic emotion,
 Hopes like young eagles at play,
 Vows of unheard-of and endless devotion,
 How ye have faded away!

Yet, though the ebbing of Time's mighty river
 Leave our young blossoms to die,
 Let him roll smooth in his current forever,
 Till the last pebble is dry.

AN IMPROMPTU.

NOT PREMEDITATED.

1853.

THE clock has struck noon; ere it thrice tell the
 hours
 We shall meet round the table that blushes with
 flowers,
 And I shall blush deeper with shame-driven
 blood
 That I came to the banquet and brought not a
 bud.

Who cares that his verse is a beggar in art
If you see through its rags the full throb of his
heart?

Who asks if his comrade is battered and tanned
When he feels his warm soul in the clasp of his
hand?

No! be it an epic, or be it a line,
The Boys will all love it because it is mine;
I sung their last song on the morn of the day
That tore from their lives the last blossom of
May.

It is not the sunset that glows in the wine,
But the smile that beams over it, makes it divine;
I scatter these drops, and behold, as they fall,
The day-star of memory shines through them
all!

And these are the last; they are drops that I
stole

From a wine-press that crushes the life from the
soul,

But they ran through my heart and they sprang
to my brain

Till our twentieth sweet summer was smiling
again!

THE OLD MAN DREAMS.

1854.

OH for one hour of youthful joy!
Give back my twentieth spring!
I'd rather laugh, a bright-haired boy,
Than reign, a gray-beard king.

Off with the spoils of wrinkled age!
Away with Learning's crown!
Tear out life's Wisdom-written page,
And dash its trophies down!

One moment let my life-blood stream
From boyhood's fount of flame!
Give me one giddy, reeling dream
Of life all love and fame!

My listening angel heard the prayer,
And, calmly smiling, said,
"If I but touch thy silvered hair
Thy hasty wish hath sped.

"But is there nothing in thy track,
To bid thee fondly stay,
While the swift seasons hurry back
To find the wished-for day?"

“ Ah, truest soul of womankind!
Without thee what were life?
One bliss I cannot leave behind:
I'll take—my—precious—wife!”

The angel took a sapphire pen
And wrote in rainbow dew,
*The man would be a boy again,
And be a husband too!*

“ And is there nothing yet unsaid,
Before the change appears?
Remember, all their gifts have fled
With those dissolving years.”

“ Why, yes ”; for memory would recall
My fond paternal joys;
“ I could not bear to leave them all —
I'll take—my—girl—and—boys.”

The smiling angel dropped his pen,—
“ Why, this will never do;
The man would be a boy again,
And be a father too!”

And so I laughed,—my laughter woke
The household with its noise,—
And wrote my dream, when morning broke,
To please the gray-haired boys.

THE BOYS.

1859.

HAS there any old fellow got mixed with the
boys?

If there has, take him out, without making a
noise.

Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's
spite!

Old Time is a liar! We're twenty to-night!

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we
are more?

He's tipsy,—young jackanapes!—show him the
door!

“Gray temples at twenty?”—Yes! *white* if we
please;

Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's noth-
ing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mis-
take!

Look close—you will see not a sign of a flake!
We want some new garlands for those we have
shed,

And these are white roses in place of the red.

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have
been told,

Of talking (in public) as if we were old:

That boy we call "Doctor," and this we call
"Judge";

It's a neat little fiction,—of course it's all fudge.

That fellow's the "Speaker,"—the one on the
right;

"Mr. Mayor," my young one, how are you to-
night?

That's our "Member of Congress," we say when
we chaff;

There's the "Reverend" What's his name?—
don't make me laugh.

That boy with the grave mathematical look
Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
And the ROYAL SOCIETY thought it was *true*!
So they chose him right in; a good joke it was,
too!

There's a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker
brain,

That could harness a team with a logical chain;
When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled
fire,

We called him "The Justice," but now he's
"The Squire."

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the
free,

Just read on his medal, "My country," "of
thee!"

You hear that boy laughing?—You think he's
all fun;

But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has
done;

The children laugh loud as they troop to his
call,

And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest
of all!

Yes, we're boys—always playing with tongue
or with pen,

And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be
men?

Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and
gay,

Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its
gray!

The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!

And when we have done with our life-lasting
toys,

Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE
Boys!

SPRING HAS COME.

INTRA MUROS.

THE sunbeams, lost for half a year,
Slant through my pane their morning rays;
For dry northwesterners cold and clear,
The east blows in its thin blue haze.

And first the snowdrop's bells are seen,
Then close against the sheltering wall
The tulip's horn of dusky green,
The peony's dark unfolding ball.

The golden-chaliced crocus burns;
The long narcissus-blades appear;
The cone-beaked hyacinth returns
To light her blue-flamed chandelier.

The willow's whistling lashes, wrung
By the wild winds of gusty March,
With sallow leaflets lightly strung,
Are swaying by the tufted larch.

The elms have robed their slender spray
With full-blown flower and embryo leaf;
Wide o'er the clasping arch of day
Soars like a cloud their hoary chief.

See the proud tulip's flaunting cup,
That flames in glory for an hour,—
Behold it withering,—then look up,—
How meek the forest monarch's flower!

When wake the violets, Winter dies;
When sprout the elm-buds, Spring is near;
When lilacs blossom, Summer cries,
“Bud, little roses! Spring is here!”

The windows blush with fresh bouquets,
Cut with their Maydew on the lips;
The radish all its bloom displays,
Pink as Aurora's finger-tips.

Nor less the flood of light that showers
On beauty's changed corolla-shades,—
The walks are as gay as bridal bowers
With rows of many-petaled maids.

The scarlet shell-fish click and clash
In the blue barrow where they slide;
The horseman, proud of streak and splash,
Creeps homeward from his morning ride.

Here comes the dealer's awkward string,
With neck in rope and tail in knot,—

Rough colts, with careless country-swing,
In lazy walk or slouching trot.

Wild filly from the mountain-side,
Doomed to the close and chafing thills,
Lend me thy long, untiring stride
To seek with thee thy western hills!

I hear the whispering voice of Spring,
The thrush's trill, the robin's cry,
Like some poor bird with prisoned wing
That sits and sings, but longs to fly.

Oh, for one spot of living green,—
One little spot where leaves can grow,—
To love unblamed, to walk unseen,
To dream above, to sleep below!

PROLOGUE.

A PROLOGUE? Well, of course the ladies know,—
I have my doubts. No matter,—here we go!
What is a Prologue? Let our Tutor teach:
Pro means beforehand; *logos* stands for speech.
'Tis like the harper's prelude on the strings,
The prima donna's courtesy ere she sings;

Prologues in meter are to other *pros*

As worsted stockings are to engine-hose.

“The world’s a stage,”—as Shakespeare said,
one day;

The stage a world—was what he meant to say.

The outside world’s a blunder, that is clear;

The real world that Nature meant is here.

Here every foundling finds its lost mamma;

Each rogue, repentant, melts his stern papa;

Misers relent, the spendthrift’s debts are paid,

The cheats are taken in the traps they laid;

One after one the troubles all are past

Till the fifth act comes right side up at last,

When the young couple, old folks, rogues, and
all,

Join hands, so happy at the curtain’s fall.

Here suffering virtue ever finds relief,

And black-browed ruffians always come to grief.

When the lorn damsel, with a frantic screech,

And cheeks as hueless as a brandy-peach,

Cries, “Help, kyind Heaven!” and drops upon
her knees

On the green—baize,—beneath the (canvas)
trees,—

See to her side avenging Valor fly:—

“Ha! Villain! Draw! Now, Terraitorr, yield
or die!”

When the poor hero flounders in despair,

Some dear lost uncle turns up millionaire,
Clasps the young scapegrace with paternal joy,
Sobs on his neck, "*My boy!* MY Boy!! MY
BOY!!!

Ours, then, sweet friends, the real world to-
night,

Of love that conquers in disaster's spite.

Ladies, attend! While woeful cares and doubt
Wrong the soft passion in the world without,
Though fortune scowl, though prudence inter-
fere,

One thing is certain: Love will triumph here!
Lords of creation, whom your ladies rule,—
The world's great masters, when you're out of
school,—

Learn the brief moral of our evening's play:
Man has his will,—but woman has her way!
While man's dull spirit toils in smoke and fire,
Woman's swift instinct threads the electric
wire,—

The magic bracelet stretched beneath the waves.
Beats the black giant with his score of slaves.
All earthly powers confess your sovereign art
But that one rebel,—woman's willful heart.
All foes you master, but a woman's wit
Lets daylight through you ere you know you're
hit.

So, just to picture what her art can do,
Hear an old story, made as good as new.
Rudolph, professor of the headsman trade,
Alike was famous for his arm and blade.
One day a prisoner Justice had to kill
Knelt at the block to test the artist's skill.
Bare-armed, swart-visaged, gaunt, and shaggy-
browed,

Rudolph the headsman rose above the crowd.
His falchion lighted with a sudden gleam,
As the pike's armor flashes in the stream.
He sheathed his blade; he turned as if to go;
The victim knelt, still waiting for the blow.

"Why strikest not? Perform thy murderous
act,"

The prisoner said. (His voice was slightly
cracked.)

"Friend, I *have* struck," the artist straight re-
plied;

"Wait but one moment, and yourself decide."

He held his snuff-box,—“Now then, if you
please!”

The prisoner sniffed, and, with a crashing
sneeze,

Off his head tumbled,—bowed along the
floor,—

Bounced down the steps;—the prisoner said no
more!

Woman! thy falchion is a glittering eye;
If death lurk in it, oh, how sweet to die!
Thou takest hearts as Rudolph took the head;
We die with love, and never dream we're dead!

LATTER-DAY WARNINGS.

WHEN legislators keep the law,
When banks dispense with bolts and locks,
When berries—whortle, rasp, and straw—
Grow bigger *downwards* through the box,—

When he that selleth house or land
Shows leak in roof or flaw in right,—
When haberdashers choose the stand
Whose window hath the broadest light,—

When preachers tell us all they think,
And party leaders all they mean,—
When what we pay for, that we drink,
From real grape and coffee-bean,—

When lawyers take what they would give,
And doctors give what they would take,—
When city fathers eat to live,
Save when they fast for conscience' sake,—

When one that hath a horse on sale
Shall bring his merit to the proof,
Without a lie for every nail
That holds the iron on the hoof,—

When in the usual place for rips
Our gloves are stitched with special care,
And guarded well the whalebone tips
Where first umbrellas need repair,—

When Cuba's weeds have quite forgot
The power of suction to resist,
And claret-bottles harbor not
Such dimples as would hold your fist,—

When publishers no longer steal,
And pay for what they stole before,—
When the first locomotive's wheel
Rolls through the Hoosac Tunnel's bore;—

Till then let Cumming blaze away,
And Miller's saints blow up the globe;
But when you see that blessed day.
Then order your ascension robe!

ALBUM VERSES.

WHEN Eve had led her lord away,
And Cain had killed his brother,
The stars and flowers, the poets say,
Agreed with one another

To cheat the cunning tempter's art,
And teach the race its duty,
By keeping on its wicked heart
Their eyes of light and beauty.

A million sleepless lids, they say,
Will be at least a warning;
And so the flowers would watch by day,
The stars from eve to morning.

On hill and prairie, field and lawn,
Their dewy eyes upturning,
The flowers still watch from reddening dawn
Till western skies are burning.

Alas! each hour of daylight tells
A tale of shame so crushing,
That some turn white as sea-bleached shells,
And some are always blushing.

But when the patient stars look down
On all their light discovers,
The traitor's smile, the murderer's frown,
The lips of lying lovers,

They try to shut their saddening eyes,
And in the vain endeavor
We see them twinkling in the skies,
And so they wink forever.

A GOOD TIME GOING!

BRAVE singer of the coming time,
Sweet minstrel of the joyous present,
Crowned with the noblest wreath of rhyme,
The holly-leaf of Ayrshire's peasant,
Good-by! Good-by!—Our hearts and hands,
Our lips in honest Saxon phrases,
Cry, God be with him, till he stands
His feet among the English daisies!

'Tis here we part;—for other eyes
The busy deck, the fluttering streamer,
The dripping arms that plunge and rise,
The waves in foam, the ship in tremor,
The kerchiefs waving from the pier,
The cloudy pillar gliding o'er him,

The deep blue desert, lone and drear,
With heaven above and home before him!

His home!—the Western giant smiles,
And twirls the spotty globe to find it;—
This little speck the British Isles?
'Tis but a freckle,—never mind it!
He laughs, and all his prairies roll,
Each gurgling cataract roars and chuckles,
And ridges stretched from pole to pole
Heave till they crack their iron knuckles!

But Memory blushes at the sneer,
And Honor turns with frown defiant,
And Freedom, leaning on her spear,
Laughs louder than the laughing giant:
“An islet is a world,” she said,
“When glory with its dust has blended,
And Britain keeps her noble dead
Till earth and seas and skies are rended!”

Beneath each swinging forest-bough
Some arm as stout in death reposes,—
From wave-washed foot to heaven-kissed brow
Her valor's life-blood runs in roses;
Nay, let our brothers of the West
Write smiling in their florid pages,

One half her soil has walked the rest
In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages!

Hugged in the clinging billow's clasp,
From sea-weed fringe to mountain heather,
The British oak with rooted grasp
Her slender handful holds together;—
With cliffs of white and bowers of green,
And Ocean narrowing to caress her,
And hills and threaded streams between,—
Our little mother isle, God bless her!

In earth's broad temple where we stand,
Fanned by the eastern gales that brought us,
We hold the missal in our hand,
Bright with the lines our Mother taught us.
Where'er its blazoned page betrays
The glistening links of gilded fetters,
Behold, the half-turned leaf displays
Her rubric stained in crimson letters!

Enough! To speed a parting friend
'Tis vain alike to speak and listen;—
Yet stay,—these feeble accents blend
With rays of light from eyes that glisten.
Good-by! once more,—and kindly tell
In words of peace the young world's story,—
And say, besides, we love too well
Our mothers' soil, our fathers' glory!

THE LAST BLOSSOM.

THOUGH young no more, we still would dream
Of beauty's dear deluding wiles ;
The leagues of life to graybeards seem
Shorter than boyhood's lingering miles.

Who knows a woman's wild caprice?
It played with Goethe's silver hair,
And many a Holy Father's "niece"
Has softly smoothed the papal chair.

When sixty bids us sigh in vain
To melt the heart of sweet sixteen,
We think upon those ladies twain
Who loved so well the tough old Dean.

We see the Patriarch's wintry face,
The maid of Egypt's dusky glow,
And dream that Youth and Age embrace,
As April violets fill with snow.

Tranced in her lord's Olympian smile
His lotus-loving Memphian lies,—
The musky daughter of the Nile,
With plaited hair and almond eyes.

Might we but share one wild caress
Ere life's autumnal blossoms fall,
And Earth's brown, clinging lips impress
The long cold kiss that waits us all!

My bosom heaves, remembering yet
The morning of that blissful day,
When Rose, the flower of spring, I met,
And gave my raptured soul away.

Flung from her eyes of purest blue,
A lasso, with its leaping chain,
Light as a loop of larkspurs, flew
O'er sense and spirit, heart and brain.

Thou com'st to cheer my waning age,
Sweet vision, waited for so long!
Dove that would seek the poet's cage
Lured by the magic breath of song!

She blushes! Ah, reluctant maid,
Love's *drapeau rouge* the truth has told!
O'er girlhood's yielding barricade
Floats the great Leveler's crimson fold!

Come to my arms!—love heeds not years;
No frost the bud of passion knows.
Ha! what is this my frenzy hears?
A voice behind me uttered,—Rose!

Sweet was her smile,—but not for me;
Alas! when woman looks *too* kind,
Just turn your foolish head and see,—
Some youth is walking close behind!

CONTENTMENT.

“ Man wants but little here below.”

LITTLE I ask; my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone,
(A *very plain* brown stone will do,) —
That I may call my own;—
And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;
Three courses are as good as ten; —
If nature can subsist on three,
Thank Heaven for three. Amen!
I always thought cold victual nice;—
My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock, some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share,—
I only ask that Fortune send
A *little* more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,
And titles are but empty names ;
I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
But only near St. James ;
I'm very sure I should not care
To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles ; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things ;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me ;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire ;
(Good, heavy silks are never dear ;)—
I own perhaps I *might* desire
Some shawls of true Cashmere,—
Some marrowy crapes of China silk,
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
So fast that folks must stop and stare ;
An easy gait—two forty-five—
Suits me ; I do not care ;—
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt*,
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own

Titians and Raphaels three or four,—
I love so much their style and tone,
One Turner, and no more,
(A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—
The sunshine painted with a squirt.)

Of books but few,—some fifty score

For daily use, and bound for wear;
The rest upon an upper floor;—
Some *little* luxury *there*
Of red morocco's gilded gleam
And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,

Which others often show for pride,
I value for their power to please,
And selfish churls deride;—
One Stradivarius, I confess,
Two Meerschauts, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,

Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—
Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
But *all* must be of buhl?
Give grasping pomp its double share,—
I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die
Nor long for Midas' golden touch;
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
I shall not miss them *much*,—
Too grateful for the blessing lent
Of simple taste and mind content!

THE MEETING OF THE DRYADS.

It was not many centuries since,
When, gathered on the moonlit green,
Beneath the Tree of Liberty,
A ring of weeping sprites was seen.

The freshman's lamp had long been dim,
The voice of busy day was mute,
And tortured Melody had ceased
Her sufferings on the evening flute.

They met not as they once had met,
To laugh o'er many a jocund tale:
But every pulse was beating low,
And every cheek was cold and pale.

There rose a fair but faded one,
Who oft had cheered them with her song;

She waved a mutilated arm,
And silence held the listening throng.

“ Sweet friends,” the gentle nymph began,
“ From opening bud to withering leaf,
One common lot has bound us all,
In every change of joy and grief.

“ While all around has felt decay,
We rose in ever-living prime,
With broader shade and fresher green,
Beneath the crumbling step of Time.

“ When often by our feet has passed
Some biped, Nature’s walking whim,
Say, have we trimmed one awkward shape,
Or lopped away one crooked limb?

“ Go on, fair Science; soon to thee
Shall Nature yield her idle boast;
Her vulgar fingers formed a tree,
But thou hast trained it to a post.

“ Go, paint the birch’s silver rind,
And quilt the peach with softer down;
Up with the willow’s trailing threads,
Off with the sunflower’s radiant crown!

“Go, plant the lily on the shore,
And set the rose among the waves,
And bid the tropic bud unbind
Its silken zone in arctic caves;

Bring bellows for the panting winds,
Hang up a lantern by the moon,
And give the nightingale a fife,
And lend the eagle a balloon!

“I cannot smile,—the tide of scorn,
That rolled through every bleeding vein,
Comes kindling fiercer as it flows
Back to its burning source again.

“Again in every quivering leaf
That moment's agony I feel,
When limbs, that spurned the northern blast,
Shrunk from the sacrilegious steel.

“A curse upon the wretch who dared
To crop us with his felon saw!
May every fruit his lip shall taste
Lie like a bullet in his maw.

“In every julep that he drinks,
May gout, and bile, and headache be;

And when he strives to calm his pain,
May colic mingle with his tea.

“May nightshade cluster round his path,
And thistles shoot, and brambles cling;
May blistering ivy scorch his veins,
And dogwood burn, and nettles sting.

“On him may never shadow fall,
When fever racks his throbbing brow,
And his last shilling buy a rope
To hang him on my highest bough!”

She spoke;—the morning's herald beam
Sprang from the bosom of the sea,
And every mangled sprite returned
In sadness to her wounded tree.

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.

THERE was a sound of hurrying feet,
A tramp on echoing stairs,
There was a rush along the aisles,—
It was the hour of prayers.

And on, like Ocean's midnight wave,
The current rolled along,

When, suddenly, a stranger form
Was seen amidst the throng.

He was a dark and swarthy man,
That uninvited guest;
A faded coat of bottle-green
Was buttoned round his breast.

There was not one among them all
Could say from whence he came;
Nor beardless boy, nor ancient man,
Could tell that stranger's name.

All silent as the sheeted dead,
In spite of sneer and frown,
Fast by a gray-haired senior's side
He sat him boldly down.

There was a look of horror flashed
From out the tutor's eyes:
When all around him rose to pray,
The stranger did not rise!

A murmur broke along the crowd,
The prayer was at an end;
With ringing heels and measured tread,
A hundred forms descend.

Through sounding aisle, o'er grating stair,
The long procession poured,
Till all were gathered on the seats
Around the Commons board.

That fearful stranger! down he sat,
Unasked, yet undismayed;
And on his lip a rising smile
Of scorn or pleasure played.

He took his hat and hung it up,
With slow but earnest air;
He stripped his coat from off his back,
And placed it on a chair.

Then from his nearest neighbor's side
A knife and plate he drew;
And, reaching out his hand again,
He took his teacup too.

How fled the sugar from the bowl!
How sunk the azure cream!
They vanished like the shapes that float
Upon a summer's dream.

A long, long draught,—an outstretched
hand,—
And crackers, toast, and tea,

They faded from the stranger's touch,
Like dew upon the sea

Then clouds were dark on many a brow,
Fear sat upon their souls,
And in a bitter agony,
They clasped their buttered rolls.

A whisper trembled through the crowd,—
Who could the stranger be?
And some were silent, for they thought
A cannibal was he.

What if the creature should arise,—
For he was stout and tall,—
And swallow down a sophomore,
Coat, crow's-foot, cap, and all!

All sullenly the stranger rose;
They sat in mute despair;
He took his hat from off the peg,
His coat from off the chair.

Four freshmen fainted on the seat,
Six swooned upon the floor;
Yet on the fearful being passed,
And shut the chapel door.

There is full many a starving man,
That walks in bottle green,
But never more that hungry one
In Commons hall was seen.

Yet often at the sunset hour,
When tolls the evening bell,
The freshman lingers on the steps,
That frightful tale to tell.

THE TOADSTOOL.

THERE'S a thing that grows by the fainting
flower,
And springs in the shade of the lady's bower ;
The lily shrinks, and the rose turns pale,
When they feel its breath in the summer gale,
And the tulip curls its leaves in pride,
And the blue-eyed violet starts aside ;
But the lily may flaunt, and the tulip stare,
For what does the honest toadstool care ?

She does not glow in a painted vest,
And she never blooms on the maiden's breast ;
But she comes, as the saintly sisters do,
In a modest suit of a Quaker hue.

And, when the stars in the evening skies
Are weeping dew from their gentle eyes,
The toad comes out from his hermit cell,
The tale of his faithful love to tell.

Oh, there is light in her lover's glance,
That flies to her heart like a silver lance;
His breeches are made of spotted skin,
His jacket is tight, and his pumps are thin;
In a cloudless night you may hear his song,
As its pensive melody floats along,
And, if you will look by the moonlight fair,
The trembling form of the toad is there.

And he twines his arms round her slender stem,
In the shade of her velvet diadem;
But she turns away in her maiden shame,
And will not breathe on the kindling flame;
He sings at her feet through the livelong night,
And creeps to his cave at the break of light;
And whenever he comes to the air above,
His throat is swelling with baffled love.

THE SPECTER PIG.

A BALLAD.

It was the stalwart butcher man,
That knit his swarthy brow,
And said the gentle Pig must die
And sealed it with a vow.

And oh! it was the gentle Pig
Lay stretched upon the ground,
And ah! it was the cruel knife
His little heart that found.

They took him then, those wicked men,
They trailed him all along:
They put a stick between his lips,
And through his heels a thong;

And round and round an oaken beam
A hempen cord they flung,
And, like a mighty pendulum,
All solemnly he swung!

Now say thy prayers, thou sinful man,
And think what thou hast done,

And read thy catechism well,
Thou bloody-minded one;

For if his spirit should walk by night,
It better were for thee,
That thou wert moldering in the ground,
Or bleaching in the sea.

It was the savage butcher then,
That made a mock of sin,
And swore a very wicked oath,
He did not care a pin.

It was the butcher's youngest son,—
His voice was broke with sighs,
And with his pocket-handkerchief
He wiped his little eyes;

All young and ignorant was he,
But innocent and mild,
And, in his soft simplicity,
Out spoke the tender child:—

“Oh, father, father, list to me;
The Pig is deadly sick,
And men have hung him by his heels,
And fed him with a stick.”

It was the bloody butcher then,
That laughed as he would die,
Yet did he soothe the sorrowing child,
And bid him not to cry ;—

“ Oh, Nathan, Nathan, what's a Pig,
That thou shouldst weep and wail?
Come, bear thee like a butcher's child,
And thou shalt have his tail ! ”

It was the butcher's daughter then,
So slender and so fair,
That sobbed as if her heart would break,
And tore her yellow hair ;

And thus she spoke in thrilling tone,—
Fast fell the tear-drops big :—
“ Ah ! woe is me ! Alas ! Alas !
The Pig ! The Pig ! The Pig ! ”

Then did her wicked father's lips
Make merry with her woe,
And call her many a naughty name,
Because she whimpered so.

Ye need not weep, ye gentle ones,
In vain your tears are shed,

Ye cannot wash his crimson hand,
Ye cannot soothe the dead.

The bright sun folded on his breast
His robes of rosy flame,
And softly over all the west
The shades of evening came.

He slept, and troops of murdered Pigs
Were busy with his dreams;
Loud rang their wild, unearthly shrieks,
Wide yawned their mortal seams.

The clock struck twelve; the Dead hath
heard;
He opened both his eyes,
And sullenly he shook his tail
To lash the feeding flies.

One quiver of the hempen cord,—
One struggle and one bound,—
With stiffened limb and leaden eye,
The Pig was on the ground!

And straight towards the sleeper's house
His fearful way he wended;
And hooting owl and hovering bat
On midnight wing attended.

Back flew the bolt, up rose the latch,
And open swung the door,
And little mincing feet were heard
Pat, pat along the floor.

Two hoofs upon the sanded floor,
And two upon the bed;
And they are breathing side by side,
The living and the dead!

“Now wake, now wake, thou butcher man!
What makes thy cheek so pale?
Take hold! take hold! thou dost not fear
To clasp a specter's tail?”

Untwisted every winding coil;
The shuddering wretch took hold,
All like an icicle it seemed,
So tapering and so cold.

“Thou com'st with me, thou butcher
man!”—

He strives to loose his grasp,
But, faster than the clinging vine,
Those twining spirals clasp:

And open, open swung the door,
And, fleetier than the wind,

The shadowy specter swept before,
The butcher trailed behind.

Fast fled the darkness of the night,
And morn rose faint and dim;
They called full loud, they knocked full
long,
They did not waken him.

Straight, straight towards that oaken beam,
A trampled pathway ran;
A ghastly shape was swinging there,—
It was the butcher man.

TO A CAGED LION.

Poor conquered monarch! though that haughty
glance

Still speaks thy courage unsubdued by time,
And in the grandeur of thy sullen tread

Lives the proud spirit of thy burning clime;—
Bettered by things that shudder at thy roar,
Torn from thy pathless wilds to pace this narrow
floor!

Thou wast the victor, and all nature shrunk
Before the thunders of thine awful wrath;

The steel-armed hunter viewed thee from afar,
Fearless and trackless in thy lonely path!
The famished tiger closed his flaming eye,
And crouched and panted as thy step went by!

Thou art the vanquished, and insulting man
Bars thy broad bosom as a sparrow's wing;
His nerveless arms thine iron sinews bind,
And lead in chains the desert's fallen king;
Are these the beings that have dared to twine
Their feeble threads around those limbs of thine?

So must it be; the weaker, wiser race,
That wields the tempest and that rides the sea,
Even in the stillness of thy solitude
Must teach the lesson of its power to thee;
And thou, the terror of the trembling wild,
Must bow thy savage strength, the mockery of
a child!

THE STAR AND THE WATER-LILY.

THE sun stepped down from his golden throne,
And lay in the silent sea,
And the Lily had folded her satin leaves,
For a sleepy thing was she;

What is the Lily dreaming of?

Why crisp the waters blue?

See, see, she is lifting her varnished lid!

Her white leaves are glistening through!

The Rose is cooling his burning cheek

In the lap of the breathless tide;—

The Lily hath sisters fresh and fair,

That would lie by the Rose's side;

He would love her better than all the rest,

And he would be fond and true;—

But the Lily unfolded her weary lids,

And looked at the sky so blue.

Remember, remember, thou silly one,

How fast will thy summer glide,

And wilt thou wither a virgin pale,

Or flourish a blooming bride?

“Oh, the Rose is old, and thorny, and cold,

And he lives on earth,” said she;

“But the Star is fair and he lives in the air,

And he shall my bridegroom be.”

But what if the stormy cloud should come,

And ruffle the silver sea?

Would he turn his eye from the distant sky,

To smile on a thing like thee?

Oh, no, fair Lily, he will not send
One ray from his far-off throne;
The winds shall blow, and the waves shall flow,
And thou wilt be left alone.

There is not a leaf on the mountain-top,
Nor a drop of evening dew,
Nor a golden sand on the sparkling shore,
Nor a pearl in the waters blue,
That he has not cheered with his fickle smile,
And warmed with his faithless beam,—
And will he be true to a pallid flower,
That floats on the quiet stream?

Alas for the Lily! she would not heed,
But turned to the skies afar,
And bared her breast to the trembling ray
That shot from the rising star;
The cloud came over the darkened sky,
And over the waters wide:
She looked in vain through the beating rain,
And sank in the stormy tide.

ILLUSTRATION OF A PICTURE.

“ A SPANISH GIRL IN REVERIE.”

SHE twirled the string of golden beads,
That round her neck was hung,—
My grandsire's gift; the good old man
Loved girls when he was young;
And, bending lightly o'er the cord,
And turning half away,
With something like a youthful sigh,
Thus spoke the maiden gray:—

“ Well, one may trail her silken robe,
And bind her locks with pearls,
And one may wreath the woodland rose
Among her floating curls;
And one may tread the dewy grass,
And one the marble floor,
Nor half-hid bosom heave the less,
Nor broidered corset more!

“ Some years ago, a dark-eyed girl
Was sitting in the shade,—
There's something brings her to my mind
In that young dreaming maid,—

And in her hand she held a flower,
A flower, whose speaking hue
Said, in the language of the heart,
'Believe the giver true.'

"And, as she looked upon its leaves,
The maiden made a vow
To wear it when the bridal wreath
Was woven for her brow;
She watched the flower, as, day by day,
The leaflets curled and died;
But he who gave it never came
To claim her for his bride.

"Oh, many a summer's morning glow
Has lent the rose its ray,
And many a winter's drifting snow
Has swept its bloom away;
But she has kept that faithless pledge
To this, her winter hour,
And keeps it still, herself alone,
And wasted like the flower."

Her pale lip quivered, and the light
Gleamed in her moistening eyes;—
I asked her how she liked the tints
In those Castilian skies?

"She thought them misty,—'twas perhaps
Because she stood too near;"
She turned away, and as she turned
I saw her wipe a tear.

A ROMAN AQUEDUCT.

THE sun-browned girl, whose limbs recline
When noon her languid hand has laid
Hot on the green flakes of the pine,
Beneath its narrow disk of shade;

As, through the flickering noontide glare,
She gazes on the rainbow chain
Of arches, lifting once in air
The rivers of the Roman's plain;—

Say, does her wandering eye recall
The mountain-current's icy wave,—
Or for the dead one tear let fall,
Whose founts are broken by their grave?

From stone to stone the ivy weaves
Her braided tracery's winding veil,
And lacing stalks and tangled leaves
Nod heavy in the drowsy gale.

And lightly floats the pendent vine,
That swings beneath her slender bow,
Arch answering arch,—whose rounded line
Seems mirrored in the wreath below.

How patient Nature smiles at Fame!
The weeds, that strewed the victor's way,
Feed on his dust to shroud his name,
Green where his proudest towers decay.

See, through that channel, empty now,
The scanty rain its tribute pours,—
Which cooled the lip and laved the brow
Of conquerors from a hundred shores.

Thus bending o'er the nation's bier,
Whose wants the captive earth supplied,
The dew of Memory's passing tear
Falls on the arches of her pride!

FROM A BACHELOR'S PRIVATE
JOURNAL.

SWEET Mary, I have never breathed
The love it were in vain to name;
Though round my heart a serpent wreathed,
I smiled, or strove to smile, the same.

Once more the pulse of Nature glows
With faster throb and fresher fire,
While music round her pathway flows,
Like echoes from a hidden lyre.

And is there none with me to share
The glories of the earth and sky?
The eagle through the pathless air
Is followed by one burning eye.

Ah, no! the cradled flowers may wake,
Again may flow the frozen sea,
From every cloud a star may break,—
There comes no second spring to me.

Go,—ere the painted toys of youth
Are crushed beneath the tread of years;
Ere visions have been chilled to truth,
And hopes are washed away in tears.

Go,—for I will not bid thee weep,—
Too soon my sorrows will be thine,
And evening's troubled air shall sweep
The incense from the broken shrine.

If Heaven can hear the dying tone
Of chords that soon will cease to thrill,
The prayer that Heaven has heard alone
May bless thee when those chords are still.

LA GRISETTE.

ÄH, Clemence! when I saw thee last
Trip down the Rue de Seine,
And turning, when thy form had passed,
I said, "We meet again,"—
I dreamed not in that idle glance
Thy latest image came,
And only left to memory's trance
A shadow and a name.

The few strange words my lips had taught
Thy timid voice to speak,
Their gentle signs, which often brought
Fresh roses to thy cheek,
The trailing of thy long loose hair
Bent o'er my couch of pain,
All, all returned, more sweet, more fair;
Oh, had we met again!

I walked where saint and virgin keep
The vigil lights of Heaven,
I knew that thou hadst woes to weep,
And sins to be forgiven;
I watched where Genevieve was laid,
I knelt by Mary's shrine,

Beside me low, soft voices prayed ;
Alas ! but where was thine ?

And when the morning sun was bright,
When wind and wave were calm,
And flamed, in thousand-tinted light,
The rose of Notre Dame,
I wandered through the haunts of men,
From Boulevard to Quai,
Till, frowning o'er Saint Etienne,
The Pantheon's shadow lay.

In vain, in vain ; we meet no more,
Nor dream what fates befall ;
And long upon the stranger's shore
My voice on thee may call,
When years have clothed the line in moss
That tells thy name and days,
And withered, on thy simple cross,
The wreaths of Père-la-Chaise !

OUR YANKEE GIRLS.

LET greener lands and bluer skies,
If such the wide earth shows,
With fairer cheeks and brighter eyes,
Match us the star and rose ;

The winds that lift the Georgian's veil,
Or wave Circassia's curls,
Waft to their shores the sultan's sail,—
Who buys our Yankee girls?

The gay grisette whose fingers touch
Love's thousand chords so well;
The dark Italian, loving much,
But more than *one* can tell;
And England's fair-haired, blue-eyed dame,
Who binds her brow with pearls;—
Ye who have seen them, can they shame
Our own sweet Yankee girls?

And what if court or castle vaunt
Its children loftier born?—
Who heeds the silken tassel's flaunt
Beside the golden corn?
They ask not for the dainty toil
Of ribboned knights and earls,
The daughters of the virgin soil,
Our freeborn Yankee girls!

By every hill whose stately pines
Wave their dark arms above
The home where some fair being shines,
To warm the wilds with love,

From barest rock to bleakest shore
Where farthest sail unfurls,
That Stars and Stripes are streaming o'er—
God bless our Yankee girls!

L'INCONNUE.

Is thy name Mary, maiden fair?
Such should, methinks, its music be;
The sweetest name that mortals bear
Were best befitting thee;
And she to whom it once was given,
Was half of earth and half of heaven.

I hear thy voice, I see thy smile,
I look upon thy folded hair;
Ah! while we dream not they beguile,
Our hearts are in the snare;
And she who chains a wild bird's wing
Must start not if her captive sing.

So, lady, take the leaf that falls,
To all but thee unseen, unknown:
When evening shades thy silent walls,
Then read it all alone;
In stillness read, in darkness seal,
Forget, despise, but not reveal!

STANZAS.

STRANGE ! that one lightly whispered tone
Is far, far sweeter unto me,
Than all the sounds that kiss the earth,
Or breathe along the sea ;
But, lady, when thy voice I greet,
Not heavenly music seems so sweet.

I look upon the fair blue skies,
And naught but empty air I see ;
But when I turn me to thine eyes,
It seemeth unto me,
Ten thousand angels spread their wings
Within those little azure rings.

The lily hath the softest leaf
That ever western breeze hath fanned,
But thou shalt have the tender flower,
So I may take thy hand ;
That little hand to me doth yield
More joy than all the broidered field.

O lady ! there be many things
That seem right fair, below, above ;

But sure not one among them all
Is half so sweet as love ;—
Let us not pay our vows alone,
But join two altars both in one.

LINES BY A CLERK.

OH ! I did love her dearly,
And gave her toys and rings,
And I thought she meant sincerely,
When she took my pretty things.
But her heart has grown as icy
As a fountain in the fall,
And her love that was so spicy,
It did not last at all.

I gave her once a locket,
It was filled with my own hair,
And she put it in her pocket
With very special care.
But a jeweler has got it,—
He offered it to me,—
And another that is not it
Around her neck I see.

For my cooings and my billings
I do not now complain,
But my dollars and my shillings
Will never come again ;

They were earned with toil and sorrow,
But I never told her that,
And now I have to borrow,
And want another hat.

Think, think, thou cruel Emma,
When thou shalt hear my woe,
And know my sad dilemma,
That thou hast made it so.
See, see my beaver rusty,
Look, look upon this hole,
This coat is dim and dusty;
Oh let it rend thy soul!

Before the gates of fashion
I daily bent my knee,
But I sought the shrine of passion,
And found my idol,—thee.
Though never love intenser
Had bowed a soul before it,
Thine eye was on the censer,
And not the hand that bore it.

THE PHILOSOPHER TO HIS LOVE.

DEAREST, a look is but a ray
Reflected in a certain way;
A word, whatever tone it wear,
Is but a trembling wave of air;
A touch, obedience to a clause
In nature's pure material laws.

The very flowers that bend and meet,
In sweetening others, grow more sweet;
The clouds by day, the stars by night,
Inweave their floating locks of light;
The rainbow, Heaven's own forehead's braid.
Is but the embrace of sun and shade.

How few that love us have we found!
How wide the world that girds them round!
Like mountain streams we meet and part,
Each living in the other's heart,
Our course unknown, our hope to be
Yet mingled in the distant sea.

But Ocean coils and heaves in vain,
Bound in the subtle moonbeam's chain:
And love and hope do but obey
Some cold, capricious planet's ray,
Which lights and leads the tide it charms
To Death's dark caves and icy arms.

Alas! one narrow line is drawn,
That links our sunset with our dawn;
In mist and shade life's morning rose,
And clouds are round it at its close;
But ah! no twilight beam ascends
To whisper where that evening ends.

Oh! in the hour when I shall feel
Those shadows round my senses steal,

When gentle eyes are weeping o'er
The clay that feels their tears no more,
Then let thy spirit with me be,
Or some sweet angel, likest thee!

THE POET'S LOT.

What is a poet's fame?—

To write a girl a sonnet,
To get a ring, or some such thing,
And fustianize upon it.

What is a poet's fame?—

Sad hints about his reason,
And sadder praise from garreteers,
To be returned in season.

Where go the poet's lines?—

Answer, ye evening tapers!
Ye auburn locks, ye golden curls,
Speak from your folded papers!

Child of the plowshare, smile;

Boy of the counter, grieve not,
Though muses round thy trundle-bed
Their brodered tissue weave not.

The poet's future holds

No civic wreath above him:
Nor slated roof, nor varnished chaise,
Nor wife nor child to love him.

Maid of the village inn,
Who workest woe on satin,
(The grass in black, the graves in green,
The epitaph in Latin,)
Trust not to them who say,
In stanzas, they adore thee;
Oh, rather sleep in churchyard clay,
With urn and cherub o'er thee!

TO A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER.

WAN-VISAGED thing! thy virgin leaf
To me looks more than deadly pale,
Unknowing what may stain thee yet,—
A poem or a tale.

Who can thy unborn meaning scan?
Can Seer or Sibyl read thee now?
No,—seek to trace the fate of man
Writ on his infant brow.

Love may light 'on thy snowy cheek,
And shake his Eden-breathing plumes;
Then shalt thou tell how Lelia smiles,
Or Angelina blooms.

Satire may lift his bearded lance,
Forestalling Time's slow-moving scythe,
And scattered on thy little field,
Disjointed bards may writhe.

Perchance a vision of the night,
Some grizzled specter, gaunt and thin,
Or sheeted corpse, may stalk along,
Or skeleton may grin!

If it should be in pensive hour
Some sorrow-moving theme I try,
Ah, maiden, how thy tears will fall,
For all I doom to die!

But if in merry mood I touch
Thy leaves, then shall the sight of thee
Sow smiles as thick on rosy lips
As ripples on the sea.

The Weekly press shall gladly stoop
To bind thee up among its sheaves;
The Daily steal thy shining ore,
To gild its leaden leaves.

Thou hast no tongue, yet thou canst speak,
Till distant shores shall hear the sound;
Thou hast no life, yet thou canst breathe
Fresh life on all around.

Thou art the arena of the wise,
The noiseless battle-ground of fame;
The sky where halos may be wreathed
Around the humblest name.

Take, then, this treasure to thy trust,
To win some idle reader's smile,

Then fade and molder in the dust,
Or swell some bonfire's pile.

TO THE PORTRAIT OF "A GENTLE-
MAN"

IN THE ATHENÆUM GALLERY.

It may be so,—perhaps thou hast
A warm and loving heart;
I will not blame thee for thy face,
Poor devil as thou art.

That thing thou fondly deem'st a nose,
Unsightly though it be,—
In spite of all the cold world's scorn,
It may be much to thee.

Those eyes,—among thine elder friends
Perhaps they pass for blue,—
No matter,—if a man can see,
What more have eyes to do?

Thy mouth,—that fissure in thy face,
By something like a chin,—
May be a very useful place
To put thy victual in.

I know thou hast a wife at home,
I know thou hast a child,
By that subdued, domestic smile
Upon thy features mild.

That wife sits fearless by thy side,
That cherub on thy knee;
They no not shudder at thy looks,
They do not shrink from thee.

Above thy mantle is a hook,—
A portrait once was there;
It was thine only ornament,—
Alas! that hook is bare.

She begged thee not to let it go,
She begged thee all in vain;
She wept,—and breathed a trembling prayer
To meet it safe again.

It was a bitter sight to see
That picture torn away;
It was a solemn thought to think
What all her friends would say!

And after in her calmer hours,
And in her happy dreams,
Upon its long-deserted hook
The absent portrait seems.

Thy wretched infant turns his head
In melancholy wise,
And looks to meet the placid stare
Of those unbending eyes.

I never saw thee, lovely one,—
Perchance I never may;

It is not often that we cross
Such people in our way;
But if we meet in distant years,
Or on some foreign shore,
Sure I can take my Bible oath,
I've seen that face before.

THE BALLAD OF THE OYSTERMAN.

It was a tall young oysterman lived by the river-
side,
His shop was just upon the bank, his boat was
on the tide;
The daughter of a fisherman, that was so straight
and slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite to
him.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a lovely
maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a-sitting in the
shade;
He saw her wave her handkerchief, as much as
if to say,
"I'm wide awake, young oysterman, and all the
folks away."

Then up arose the oysterman, and to himself
said he,
"I guess I'll leave the skiff at home, for fear
that folks should see;

I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss his
dear,

Leander swam the Hellespont,—and I will swim
this here.”

And he has leaped into the waves, and crossed
the shining stream,

And he has clambered up the bank, all in the
moonlight gleam ;

Oh, there were kisses sweet as dew, and words
as soft as rain,—

But they have heard her father’s step, and in he
leaps again !

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—“ Oh, what
was that, my daughter ? ”

“ ’Twas nothing but a pebble, sir, I threw into
the water.”

“ And what is that, pray tell me, love, that pad-
dles off so fast ? ”

“ It’s nothing but a porpoise, sir, that’s been
a-swimming past.”

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—“ Now bring
me my harpoon !

I’ll get into my fishing-boat and fix the fellow
soon.”

Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a snow-
white lamb,

Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks, like
seaweed on a clam.

Alas for those two loving ones! she waked not
from her swoond,
And he was taken with the cramp, and in the
waves was drowned;
But Fate has metamorphosed them, in pity of
their woe,
And now they keep an oyster-shop for mermaids
down below.

A NOONTIDE LYRIC.

THE dinner-bell, the dinner-bell
Is ringing loud and clear;
Through hill and plain, through street and lane,
It echoes far and near;
From curtained hall and white-washed stall,
Wherever men can hide,
Like bursting waves from ocean caves,
They float upon the tide.
I smell the smell of roasted meat!
I hear the hissing fry!
The beggars know where they can go,
But where, oh where shall I?
At twelve o'clock men took my hand,
At two they only stare,
And eye me with a fearful look,
As if I were a bear!
The poet lays his laurels down,
And hastens to his greens;

The happy tailor quits his goose,
To riot on his beans ;
The weary cobbler snaps his thread,
The printer leaves his pi ;
His very devil hath a home,
But what, oh what have I ?
Methinks I hear an angel voice,
That softly seems to say :
“ Pale stranger, all may yet be well,
Then wipe thy tears away ;
Erect thy head, and cock thy hat,
And follow me afar,
And thou shalt have a jolly meal,
And charge it at the bar.”

I hear the voice ! I go ! I go !
Prepare your meat and wine !
They little heed their future need
Who pay not when they dine.
Give me to-day the rosy bowl,
Give me one golden dream,—
To-morrow kick away the stool,
And dangle from the beam !

THE HOT SEASON.

THE folks, that on the first of May
Wore winter coats and hose,
Began to say, the first of June,
“ Good Lord ! how hot it grows ! ”

At last two Fahrenheits blew up,
And killed two children small,
And one barometer shot dead
A tutor with its ball!

Now all day long the locusts sang
Among the leafless trees;
Three new hotels warped inside out,
The pumps could only wheeze;
And ripe old wine, that twenty years
Had cobwebbed o'er in vain,
Came spouting through the rotten corks
Like Joly's best champagne!

The Worcester locomotives did
Their trip in half an hour;
The Lowell cars ran forty miles
Before they checked the power;
Roll brimstone soon became a drug,
And loco-focos fell;
All asked for ice, but everywhere
Saltpeter was to sell.

Plump men of morning ordered tights,
But, ere the scorching noons,
Their candle-molds had grown as loose
As Cossack pantaloons!
The dogs ran mad,—men could not try
If water they would choose;

A horse fell dead,—he only left
Four red-hot, rusty shoes!

But soon the people could not bear
The slightest hint of fire;
Allusions to caloric drew
A flood of savage ire;
The leaves on heat were all torn out
From every book at school,
And many blackguards kicked and caned,
Because they said, "Keep cool!"

The gas-light companies were mobbed,
The bakers all were shot,
The penny press began to talk
Of lynching Doctor Nott;
And all about the warehouse steps
Were angry men in droves,
Crashing and splintering through the doors
To smash the patent stoves!

The abolition men and maids
Were tanned to such a hue,
You scarce could tell them from their friends,
Unless their eyes were blue;
And, when I left, society
Had burst its ancient guards,
And Battle Street and Temple Place
Were interchanging cards!

A PORTRAIT.

A STILL, sweet, placid, moonlight face,
And slightly nonchalant,
Which seems to claim a middle place
Between one's love and aunt,
Where childhood's star has left a ray
In woman's sunniest sky,
As morning dew and blushing day
On fruit and blossom lie.

And yet,—and yet I cannot love
Those lovely lines on steel;
They beam too much of heaven above,
Earth's darker shades to feel;
Perchance some early weeds of care
Around my heart have grown,
And brows unfurrowed seem not fair,
Because they mock my own.

Alas! when Eden's gates were sealed,
How oft some sheltered flower
Breathed o'er the wanderers of the field,
Like their own bridal bower;
Yet, saddened by its loveliness,
And humbled by its pride,
Earth's fairest child they could not bless,—
It mocked them when they sighed.

AN EVENING THOUGHT.

WRITTEN AT SEA.

If sometimes in the dark blue eye,
Or in the deep red wine,
Or soothed by gentlest melody,
Still warms this heart of mine,
Yet something colder in the blood,
And calmer in the brain,
Have whispered that my youth's bright flood
Ebbs, not to flow again.

If by Helvetia's azure lake,
Or Arno's yellow stream,
Each star of memory could awake,
As in my first young dream,
I know that when mine eye shall greet
The hillsides bleak and bare,
That gird my home, it will not meet
My childhood's sunsets there.

Oh, when love's first, sweet, stolen kiss
Burned on my boyish brow,
Was that young forehead worn as this?
Was that flushed cheek as now?
Were that wild pulse and throbbing heart
Like these, which vainly strive,
In thankless strains of soulless art,
To dream themselves alive?

Alas! the morning dew is gone,
Gone ere the full of day;
Life's iron fetter still is on,
Its wreaths all torn away;
Happy if still some casual hour
Can warm the fading shrine,
Too soon to chill beyond the power
Of love, or song, or wine!

“THE WASP” AND “THE HORNET.”

THE two proud sisters of the sea,
In glory and in doom!—
Well may the eternal waters be
Their broad unsculptured tomb!
The wind that rings along the wave,
The clear unshadowed sun,
Are torch and trumpet o'er the brave,
Whose last green wreath is won!
No stranger-hand their banners furled,
No victor's shout they heard;
Unseen, above them ocean curled,
Safe by his own pale bird;
The gnashing billows heaved and fell;
Wild shrieked the midnight gale;
Far, far beneath the morning swell
Were pennon, spar, and sail.
The land of Freedom! Sea and shore
Are guarded now, as when

Her ebbing waves to victory bore
 Fair barks and gallant men ;
 Oh, many a ship of prouder name
 May wave her starry fold,
 Nor trail, with deeper light of fame,
 The paths they swept of old !

“ QUI VIVE ? ”

“ *Qui vive ?* ” The sentry’s musket rings,
 The channeled bayonet gleams ;
 High o’er him, like a raven’s wings
 The broad tricolored banner flings
 Its shadow, rustling as it swings
 Pale in the moonlight beams ;
 Pass on ! while steel-clad sentries keep
 Their vigil o’er the monarch’s sleep,
 Thy bare, unguarded breast
 Asks not the unbroken, bristling zone
 That girds yon sceptered trembler’s throne ;
 Pass on, and take thy rest !

“ *Qui vive ?* ” How oft the midnight air
 That startling cry has borne !
 How oft the evening breeze has fanned
 The banner of this haughty land,
 O’er mountain snow and desert sand,
 Ere yet its folds were torn !
 Through Jena’s carnage flying red,

Or, tossing o'er Marengo's dead,
Or curling on the towers
Where Austria's eagle quivers yet,
And suns the ruffled plumage, wet
With battle's crimson showers!

"*Qui vive?*" And is the sentry's cry,—
The sleepless soldier's hand,—
Are these—the painted folds that fly
And lift their emblems, printed high
On morning mist and sunset sky—
The guardians of a land?
No! If the patriot's pulses sleep,
How vain the watch that hirelings keep,—
The idle flag that waves,
When Conquest, with his iron heel,
Treads down the standard and the steel
That belt the soil of slaves!

A SOUVENIR.

YES, lady! I can ne'er forget,
That once in other years we met;
Thy memory may perchance recall
A festal eve, a rose-wreathed hall,
Its tapers' blaze, its mirrors' glance,
Its melting song, its ringing dance;—
Why, in thy dream of virgin joy,
Shouldst thou recall a pallid boy?

Thine eye had other forms to seek,
Why rest upon his bashful cheek?
With other tones thy heart was stirred,
Why waste on him a gentle word?
We parted, lady,—all night long
Thine ear to thrill with dance and song,—
And I—to weep that I was born
A thing thou scarce would deign to 'scorn.

And, lady! now that years have passed,
My bark has reached the shore at last;
The gales that filled her ocean wing,
Have chilled and shrunk thy hasty spring,
And eye to eye, and brow to brow,
I stand before thy presence now;—
Thy lip is smoothed, thy voice is sweet,
Thy warm hand offered when we meet.

Nay, lady! 'tis not now for me
To droop the lid or bend the knee.
I seek thee,—oh thou dost not shun;
I speak,—thou listenest like a nun;
I ask thy smile,—thy lip uncurls,
Too liberal of its flashing pearls;
Thy tears,—thy lashes sing again,—
My Hebe turns to Magdalen!

O changing youth! that evening hour
Looked down on ours,—the bud—the flower:
Thine faded in its virgin soil,
And mine was nursed in tears and toil;

Thy leaves were withering, one by one,
While mine were opening to the sun.
Which now can meet the cold and storm,
With freshest leaf and hardiest form?

Aye, lady! that once haughty glance
Still wanders through the glittering dance,
She asks in vain from others' pride,
The charity thine own denied;
And as thy fickle lips could learn
To smile and praise,—that used to spurn,
So the last offering on thy shrine
Shall be this flattering lay of mine!

THE DYING SENECA.

He died not as the martyr dies,
 Wrapped in his living shroud of flame;
He fell not as the warrior falls,
 Gasping upon the field of fame;
A gentler passage to the grave,
The murderer's softened fury gave.

Rome's slaughtered sons and blazing piles
 Had tracked the purpled demon's path,
And yet another victim lived
 To fill the fiery scroll of wrath;
Could not imperial vengeance spare
His furrowed brow and silver hair?
The field was sown with noble blood,
 The harvest reaped in burning tears,

When, rolling up its crimson flood,
Broke the long-gathering tide of years;
His diadem was rent away,
And beggars trampled on his clay.
None wept,—none pitied;—they who knelt
At morning by the despot's throne,
At evening dashed the laureled bust,
And spurned the wreaths themselves had
 strown;
The shout of triumph echoed wide,
The self-stung reptile writhed and died!

TO MY COMPANIONS.

MINE ancient chair! thy wide-embracing arms
Have clasped around me even from a boy:
Hadst thou a voice to speak of years gone by,
Thine were a tale of sorrow and of joy,
Of fevered hopes and ill-foreboding fears,
And smiles unseen, and unrecorded tears.
And thou, my table! though unwearied time
Hath set his signet on thine altered brow,
Still can I see thee in thy spotless prime,
And in my memory thou art living now;
Soon must thou slumber with forgotten
 things,
The peasant's ashes and the dust of kings.
Thou melancholy mug! thy sober brown
Hath something pensive in its evening hue,

Not like the things that please the tasteless clown,

With gaudy streaks of orange and of blue;
And I must love thee, for thou art mine own,
Pressed by my lip, and pressed by mine alone.

My broken mirror! faithless, yet beloved,
Thou who canst smile, and smile alike on all,

Oft do I leave thee, oft again return,
I scorn the siren, but obey the call;
I hate thy falsehood, while I fear thy truth,
But most I love thee, flattering friend of youth.

Primeval carpet! every well-worn thread
Has slowly parted with its virgin dye;
I saw thee fade beneath the ceaseless tread,
Fainter and fainter in mine anxious eye;
So flies the color from the brightest flower,
And heaven's own rainbow lives but for an hour.

I love you all! there radiates from our own,
A soul that lives in every shape we see;
There is a voice, to other ears unknown,
Like echoed music answering to its key.
The dungeoned captive hath a tale to tell,
Of every insect in his lonely cell;
And these poor frailties have a simple tone,
That breathes in accents sweet to me alone.

AN AFTER-DINNER POEM.

(TERPSICHORE.)

READ AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE PHI BETA
KAPPA SOCIETY, AT CAMBRIDGE, AUGUST 24,
1843.

IN narrowest girdle, O reluctant Muse,
In closest frock and Cinderella shoes,
Bound to the foot-lights for thy brief display,
One zephyr step, and then dissolve away!

Short is the space that gods and men can spare
To Song's twin brother when she is not there.
Let others water every lusty line,
As Homer's heroes did their purple wine;
Pierian revelers! Know in strains like these
The native juice, the real honest squeeze,—
Strains that, diluted to the twentieth power,
In yon grave temple might have filled an hour.
Small room for Fancy's many-chorded lyre,
For wit's bright rockets with their trains of fire,
For Pathos, struggling vainly to surprise
The iron tutor's tear-denying eyes,
For Mirth, whose finger with delusive wile
Turns the grim key of many a rusty smile,
For Satire, emptying his corrosive flood
On hissing Folly's gas-exhaling brood,
The pun, the fun, the moral, and the joke,

The hit, the thrust, the pugilistic poke,—
Small space for these, so pressed by niggard
Time,
Like that false matron, known to nursery
rhyme,—
Insidious Morey,—scarce her tale begun,
Ere listening infants weep the story done.

Oh, had we room to rip the mighty bags
That Time, the harlequin, has stuffed with rags!
Grant us one moment to unloose the strings,
While the old graybeard shuts his leather wings.
But what a heap of motley trash appears
Crammed in the bundles of successive years!
As the lost rustic on some festal day
Stares through the concourse in its vast array,—
Where in one cake a throng of faces runs,
All stuck together like a sheet of buns,—
And throws the bait of some unheeded name,
Or shoots a wink with most uncertain aim,
So roams my vision, wandering over all,
And strives to choose, but knows not where to
fall.

Skins of flayed authors, husks of dead reviews,
The turn-coat's clothes, the office-seeker's shoes,
Scraps from cold feasts, where conversation runs
Through moldy toasts to oxidated puns,
And grating songs a listening crowd endures,
Rasped from the throats of bellowing amateurs;

Sermons, whose writers played such dangerous tricks

Their own heresiarchs called them heretics,
(Strange that one term such distant poles should link,

The Priestleyan's copper and the Puseyan's zinc) ;

Poems that shuffle with superfluous legs
A blindfold minuet over addled eggs,
Where all the syllables that end in èd,
Like old dragoons, have cuts across the head ;
Essays so dark Champollion might despair
To guess what mummy of a thought was there,
Where our poor English, striped with foreign phrase,

Looks like a zebra in a parson's chaise ;
Lectures that cut our dinners down to roots,
Or prove (by monkeys) men should stick to fruits.—

Delusive error, as at trifling charge
Professor Gripes will certify at large ;
Mesmeric pamphlets, which to facts appeal,
Each fact as slippery as a fresh-caught eel ;
And figured heads, whose hieroglyphs invite
To wandering knaves that discount fools at sight ;
Such things as these, with heaps of unpaid bills,
And candy puffs and homeopathic pills,
And ancient bell-crowns with contracted rim,
And bonnets hideous with expanded brim,

And coats whose memory turns the sartor pale,
Their sequels tapering like a lizard's tail,—
How might we spread them to the smiling day,
And toss them, fluttering like the new-mown
hay,

To laughter's light or sorrow's pitying shower,
Were these brief minutes lengthened to an hour.
The narrow moments fit like Sunday shoes,—
How vast the heap, how quickly must we choose!
A few small scraps from out his mountain mass
We snatch in haste, and let the vagrant pass.

This shrunken CRUST that Cerberus could not
bite,

Stamped (in one corner) "Pickwick copyright,"
Kneaded by youngsters, raised by flattery's
yeast,

Was once a loaf, and helped to make a feast.
He for whose sake the glittering show appears
Has sown the world with laughter and with tears,
And they whose welcome wets the bumper's
brim

Have wit and wisdom,—for they all quote him.
So, many a tongue the evening hour prolongs
With spangled speeches.—let alone the songs;
Statesmen grow merry, lean attorneys laugh,
And weak teetotals warm to half and half,
And beardless Tullys, new to festive scenes,
Cut their first crop of youth's precocious greens,

And wits stand ready for impromptu claps,
With loaded barrels and percussion caps.
And Pathos, cantering through the minor keys,
Waves all her onions to the trembling breeze;
While the great Feasted views with silent glee
His scattered limbs in Yankee fricassee.

Sweet is the scene where genial friendship
plays
The pleasing game of interchanging praise.
Self-love, grimalkin of the human heart,
Is ever pliant to the master's art;
Soothed with a word, she peacefully withdraws
And sheathes in velvet her obnoxious claws,
And thrills the hand that smooths her glossy
fur,
With the light tremor of her grateful purr.
But what sad music fills the quiet hall,
If on her back a feline rival fall!
And oh, what noises shake the tranquil house
If old Self-interest cheats her of a mouse!

Thou, O my country, hast thy foolish ways,
Too apt to purr at every stranger's praise;
But if the stranger touch thy modes or laws,
Off goes the velvet and out come the claws!
And thou, Illustrious! but too poorly paid
In toasts from Pickwick for thy great crusade,
Though, while the echoes labored with thy
name,

The public trap denied thy little game,
Let other lips our jealous laws revile,—
The marble Talfourd or the rude Carlyle.—
But on thy lids, which Heaven forbids to close
Where'er the light of kindly nature glows,
Let not the dollars that a churl denies
Weigh like the shillings on a dead man's eyes!
Or, if thou wilt, be more discreetly blind,
Nor ask to see all wide extremes combined.
Not in our wastes the dainty blossoms smile
That crowd the gardens of thy scanty isle.
There white-cheeked Luxury weaves a thousand
 charms;
Here sun-browned Labor swings his naked
 arms.
Long are the furrows he must trace between
The ocean's azure and the prairie's green;
Full many a blank his destined realm dis-
 plays,
Yet sees the promise of his riper days;
Far through yon depths the panting engine
 moves,
His chariots ringing in their steel-shod grooves;
And Erie's naiad flings her diamond wave
O'er the wild sea-nymph in her distant cave!
While tasks like these employ his anxious
 hours,
What if his cornfields are not edged with
 flowers?

Though bright as silver the meridian beams,
Shine through the crystal of thine English
streams,

Turbid and dark the mighty wave is whirled
That drains our Andes and divides a world!

But lo! a PARCHMENT! Surely it would seem
The sculptured impress speaks of power supreme;

Some grave design the solemn page must claim
That shows so broadly an emblazoned name.
A sovereign's promise! Look, the lines afford
All Honor gives when Caution asks his word:
There sacred Faith has laid her snow-white
hands,

And awful Justice knit her iron bands;
Yet every leaf is stained with treachery's dye,
And every letter crusted with a lie.

Alas! no treason has degraded yet
The Arab's salt, the Indian's calumet,
A simple rite, that bears the wanderer's pledge,
Blunts the keen shaft and turns the dagger's
edge;

While jockeying senates stop to sign and seal,
And freeborn statesmen legislate to steal.
Rise, Europe, tottering with thine Atlas load,
Turn thy proud eye to Freedom's blest abode,
And round her forehead, wreathed with heavenly
flame,

Bind the dark garland of her daughter's shame!
Ye ocean clouds, that wrap the angry blast,
Coil her stained ensign round its haughty mast,
Or tear the fold that wears so foul a scar
And drive a bolt through every blackened star!
Once more—once only,—we must stop so soon:
What have we here? A GERMAN-SILVER SPOON;
A cheap utensil, which we often see
Used by the dabblers in æsthetic tea,
Of slender fabric, somewhat light and thin,
Made of mixed metal, chiefly lead and tin;
The bowl is shallow, and the handle small,
Marked in large letters with the name JEAN
PAUL.

Small as it is, its powers are passing strange,
For all who use it show a wondrous change;
And first, a fact to make the barbers stare,
It beats Macassar for the growth of hair.
See those small youngsters whose expansive ears
Maternal kindness grazed with frequent shears;
Each bristling crop a dangling mass becomes,
And all the spoonies turn to Absaloms!
Nor this alone its magic power displays,
It alters strangely all their works and ways;
With uncouth words they tire their tender lungs,
The same bald phrases on their hundred tongues:
“Ever” “The Ages” in their page appear,
“Alway” the bedlamite is called a “Seer”;

On every leaf the "earnest" sage may scan,
Portentous bore! their "many-sided" man,—
A weak eclectic, groping vague and dim,
Whose every angle is a half-starved whim,
Blind as a mole and curious as a lynx,
Who rides a beetle, which he calls a "Sphinx."
And oh, what questions asked in clubfoot rhyme
Of Earth the tongueless and the deaf-mute Time!
Here babbling "Insight" shouts in Nature's
ears

His last conundrum on the orbs and spheres;
There Self-inspection sucks its little thumb,
With "Whence am I?" and "Wherefore did I
come?"

Deluded infants! will they ever know
Some doubts must darken o'er the world below,
Though all the Platos of the nursery trail
Their "clouds of glory" at the go-cart's tail?
Oh, might these couplets their attention claim
That gain their author the Philistine's name!
(A stubborn race, that, spurning foreign law,
Was much belabored with an ass's jaw.)

Melodious Laura! From the sad retreats
That hold thee, smothered with excess of sweets,
Shade of a shadow, specter of a dream,
Glance thy wan eye across the Stygian stream!
The slipshod dreamer treads thy fragrant halls,
The sophist's cobwebs hang thy roseate walls,

And o'er the crochets of thy jingling tunes
The bard of mystery scrawls his crooked
 "runes."

Yes, thou art gone with all the tuneful hordes
That candied thoughts in amber-colored words,
And in the precincts of thy late abodes
The clattering verse-wright hammers Orphic
 odes.

Thou, soft as a zephyr, was content to fly
On the gilt pinions of a balmy sigh;
He, vast as Phœbus on his burning wheels,
Would stride through ether at Orion's heels.
Thy emblem, Laura, was a perfume-jar,
And thine, young Orpheus, is a pewter star.
The balance trembles,—be its verdict told
When the new jargon slumbers with the old!

Cease, playful goddess! From thine airy
 bound

Drop like a feather softly to the ground;
This light bolero grows a ticklish dance,
And there is mischief in thy kindling glance.
To-morrow bids thee, with rebuking frown,
Change thy gauze tunic for a home-made gown,
Too blest by fortune if the passing day
Adorn thy bosom with its frail bouquet,
But oh, still happier if the next forgets
Thy daring steps and dangerous pirouettes!

